37 REVIEWS: Red Alert ▪ Master of Orion II ▪ Tomb Raider...

PC · Mac · Online · www.cdmag.com

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS

Action · Adventure · Sims · Sports

Falcon 4.0

Exclusive new shots

Myst II: Riven

First look at super sequel

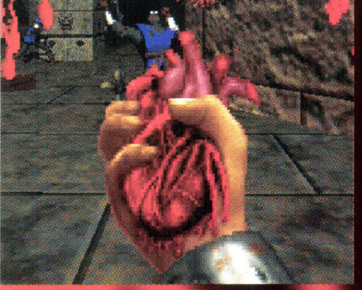
iF-22 ASF

Interactive Magic takes the Air Superiority Fighter to new heights

No.75 Feb.1997

US $6.95 CAN $7.95 UK £3.95

Meditation is the way to the heart...

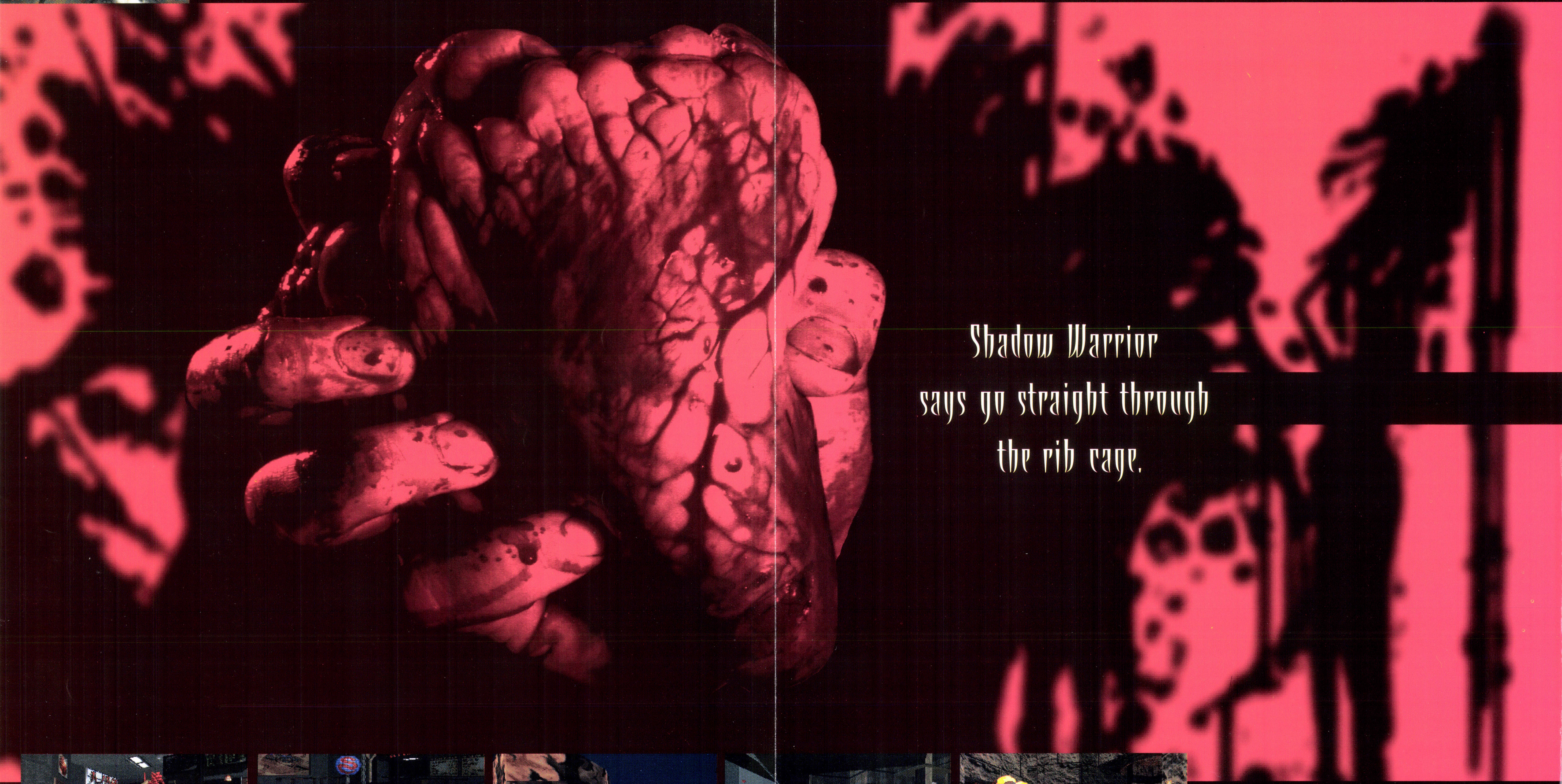


It's a heart...it's a weapon...it's Shadow Warrior. The creators of DUKE NUKEM are back. Bigger. Better. Berserker. Shadow Warrior is coming to the belly of the East spreading ninja charisma like napalm. Undead sumos must be uzied. Satanic samurai must be shurikenned. Bulldozers must be boarded. Freaks must be flattened. Geishas must be goosed. Enemies must be disemboweled and gore weapons must be gotten. Enter the world's most advanced 3-D environment...and make yourself some sushi. Shadow Warrior. Take the gore into your own hands!

FRESH FROM THE CREATORS OF **DUKE NUKEM 3D**™ COMES A BLOODY BARREL OF FUN

VISIT US ONLINE **www.shadowwarrior.com** FOR MORE GAMING INFO

PC CD-ROM



This one's a no-brainer.

4 barrel rampage in rooms-over-rooms.

Tanks. Joyride 'em or trash 'em!

Go uzi on kamikaze hell-freaks.

Sticky situations call for sticky bombs.

developed by

GT Interactive Software

www.ten.net www.3drealms.com www.gtinteractive.com

Shadow Warrior™ © 1997 3D Realms Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Published and distributed by GT Interactive Software Corp. TEN™ and the TEN™ logo are trademarks of the T.E. Network, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

SHADOW WARRIOR™

RUN LIKE HELL

COMPETE **FREE*** OVER THE **INTERNET**

DIABLO™

IS LOOSE

Run to your local
retailer or call
800-953-SNOW

BLIZZARD®
ENTERTAINMENT

WWW.BLIZZARD.COM

WarCraft II
Diablo

* Free access to battle.net requires access to the Internet. Player is responsible for all applicable Internet fees. Diablo and Blizzard Entertainment are trademarks of Davidson & Associates, Inc. All rights reserved. ©1996 Blizzard Entertainment.

FEBRUARY 1997 ISSUE 75

contents

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS

news & first looks

16 **1997 Coming into Focus**
First looks at new pictures of BattleTech: MechCommander and Rebellion, plus coverage of EarthSiege 3, Quest for Glory V, Mission to Nexus Prime, Extreme Assault, Pacific Tide, Krush Kill 'N' Destroy, Conquest Earth, History of the World and Power F1.

28 **The Beta Zone**
Updates on iM1A2 Abrams, Esoteria 3, Obsidian, Test Drive: Off Road and The Incredible Hulk

features

32 **The I-Magic Hurricane**
They'll blow you away in 1997 with games like iF-22 ASF, The Great Battles of Alexander, Fallen Haven and Semper Fi. Plus the always talkative "Wild" Bill Stealey talks, and talks... and talks. – *Steve Wartofsky & Scott Udell*

previews

44 **Falcon 4.0** – *Steve Wartofsky*
46 **Riven: The Sequel to Myst** – *Cindy Yans*
48 **Man of War** – *Scott Udell*
52 **The City of Lost Children** – *Cindy Yans*
54 **Theme Hospital** – *Scott Udell*
56 **Realms of the Haunting** – *Cindy Yans*

over the net

60 **Warbirds Update** – *John Nolan*
62 **Ordway vs. Tuskegee Airmen** – *Richard Ordway*
64 **Panzer General Online** – *Scott Udell*
64 **AD&D Dark Sun Online** – *Joe Grant Bell*

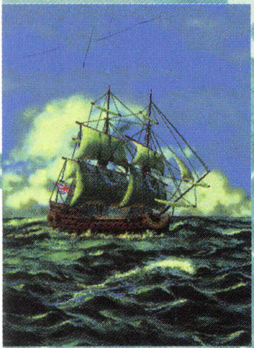
strategy

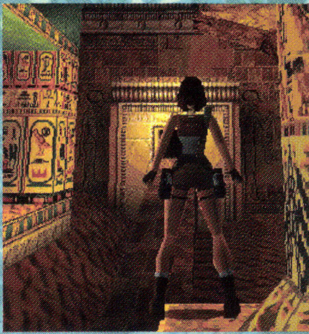
66 **Command Post** – *Scott Udell*
72 **Reviews**
'Tis a big month, with heavy hitters like Command & Conquer: Red Alert, Master of Orion II, Heroes of Might and Magic II, Lords of the Realm II, Battleground: Antietam, Power Chess, Harpoon Classic '97 and Ultimate Yahtzee.
84 **Steel Panthers II: Modern Battles Tips** – *Robert Mayer*

action

88 **Cheat Thrills** – *Steve Bauman*
90 **Reviews**
She's mad, bad and dangerous to know. She's Lara Croft of Eidos' spectacular Tomb Raider. Also: Duke Nukem 3D Plutonium Pack, Hunter Hunted, CyberGladiators, Grid Runner, Death Rally, Neo Hunter, Cold Shadow, Pinball Builder, Pray for Death, Baku-Baku, Bug, Toy Story, Ashes to Ashes, Xenophage and Slamscape.

COVER STORY
iF-22 ASF





Get Civilized...

...Again and Again.

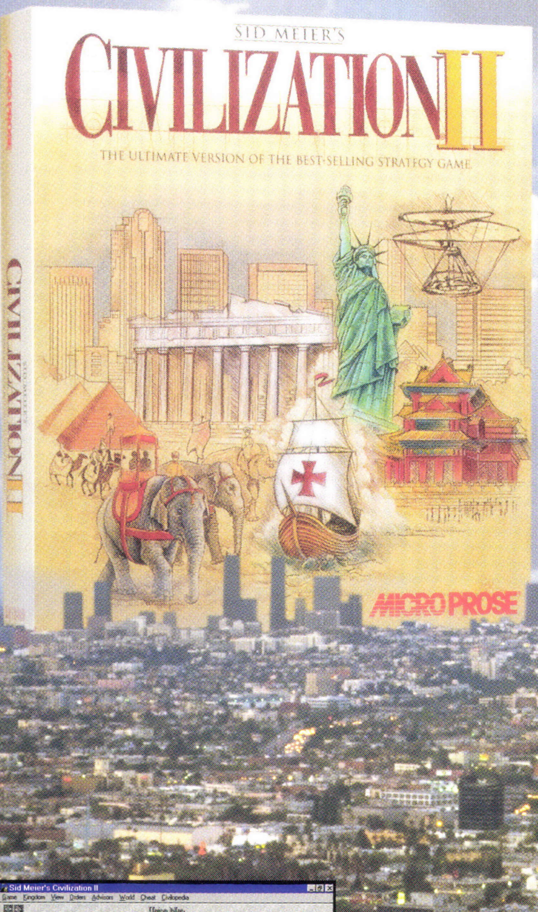
The critics are raving about CIVILIZATION II:

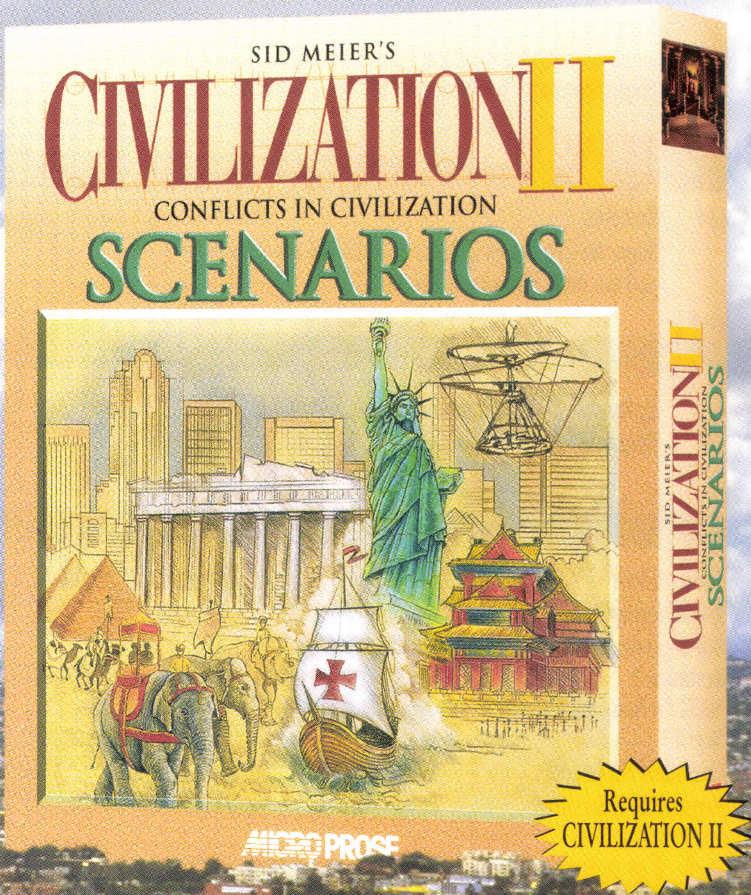
"Simply the best!"
-STRATEGY PLUS-

"Civilization II is a must have!"
-PC GAMES-

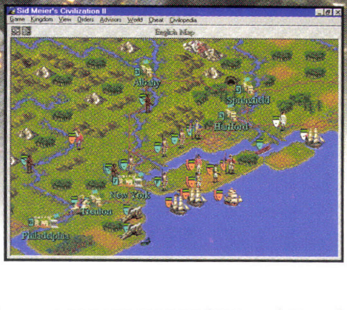
"★★★★★"
-COMPUTER GAMING WORLD-

Winner—Editor's Choice Award
-PC GAMER-


SID MEIER'S
CIVILIZATION II
THE ULTIMATE VERSION OF THE BEST-SELLING STRATEGY GAME
MICROPROSE


SID MEIER'S
CIVILIZATION II
CONFLICTS IN CIVILIZATION
SCENARIOS
MICROPROSE
Requires CIVILIZATION II

Sid Meier's Civilization II
Game
Kingdom
View
Orders
Advisors
World
Cheat
Civilopedia
Union Map
Baltimore
Harpers Ferry
Washington
Gordonsville
Richmond
Petersburg
Raleigh
Greensborough


Sid Meier's Civilization II
Game
Kingdom
View
Orders
Advisors
World
Cheat
Civilopedia
English Map
Albany
Springfield
Hartford
New York
Trenton
Philadelphia

With 20 new challenges from the Crusades to the Civil War, from Alexander the Great to an all-out alien invasion, *Sid Meier's Civilization II Scenarios* delivers more worlds to conquer and more long nights! Jump right in at whatever point in time you choose!

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Visit your local retailer or call 24 hours: 1-800-695-GAME (U.S. and Canada). Available for Windows CD-ROM.

©1996 MicroProse Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sid Meier's Civilization and MicroProse are registered trademarks of MicroProse Software, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

MICROPROSE®
www.microprose.com

adventure

98 **Road to Nowhere** – *Cindy Yans*
100 **Boots of Re** – *Andy Backer*
102 **Reviews**
Why do noodles come to mind when someone mentions Rama? Also: Phantasmagoria 2, Titanic, Harvester, Star Trek Borg, Leisure Suit Larry VII, The Music in Me, Ace Ventura: Pet Detective and The Sacred Mirror of Kofun

simulations

112 **The Hangar** – *Steve Wartofsky*
118 **Air Combat Advisor** – *Ben Chiu*
120 **Reviews**
Jetfighter III has a bit of trouble taking off. NASCAR Racing 2 doesn't have that problem at all. Plus the Silent Hunter Patrol Disk of your dreams.
122 **Flight Simulator for Windows 95 Tips** – *John Nolan*

sportswire

124 **Reviews**
Something smells funky. Trophy Bass 2, The Art of Fly Fishing and You Don't Know Jacks Sports

etc

12 **Upfront** – *Steve Wartofsky*
128 **Rebound**

cd demos

Tomb Raider
MechWarrior 2: Mercenaries
Battleground: Antietam
Ecstatica 2
NASCAR Racing 2
SkyNET
Crusader: No Regret
Krush, Kill 'N Destroy
Death Rally
Amok
3D Ultra Pinball:
Creep Night
CyberGladiators
Jetfighter III
Screamer 2
Power F1
Legends of Kesmai
Over the Reich
ZPC
A Fork in the Tale
Muzzle Velocity
Microsoft Soccer
CRUSH!

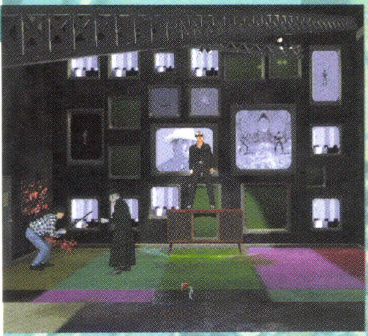
cd features

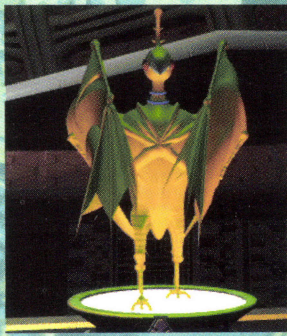
SkyNET
Esoteria 3
The Incredible Hulk
X-Car

online

cd extras

Back to Baghdad Tips – *John Nolan*
Z Tips – *Phil Thé*
Third Reich tips – *Mark McIntosh*
Wooden Ships & Iron Men Tips – *Michael Robel*
Deadlock: Planetary Conquest Tips – *Sam Baker*
Grand Prix II Tips – *Ben Chiu*
The Neverhood Tips – *Cindy Yans*
9 Tips – *Janet Blackburn*
Sherlock Holmes Tips – *Tim Royal*
Azrael's Tear Tips – *Phil Thé*
TimeLapse Tips – *Tim Royal*
Albion Tips – *Andy Backer*





review ratings

Classic ★★★★★
Excellent ★★★★☆
Good ★★★☆☆
Fair ★★☆☆☆
Why? ★☆☆☆☆

All ratings are assigned by the author of the article.
The "Stamp of Approval" is awarded by the editors of the magazine.

CG
CD

CD-ROM Instructions

Windows 95

Place the CD disc in your CD-ROM drive. The disc will auto-play. If it fails to do so, right click on your CD-ROM icon (located in "My Computer") and select OPEN. Double-click the "Install" icon.

Windows 3.1

Place the CD in your CD-ROM drive and choose File, Run from the Program Manager. Type "D:\INSTALL," where D: is the letter of your CD-ROM drive, and press ENTER. Follow the instructions on screen. After installation is complete, double-click the created icon to start.

Still having problems? Send a description of the problem along with your system configuration to cgcdtech@cdmag.com, or mail a letter with the same information to the address below. If you have a defective CD-ROM, a replacement can be obtained by sending the original CD to:

Computer Games
PO Box 21
Hancock, VT 05748
ATTN: CD replacement

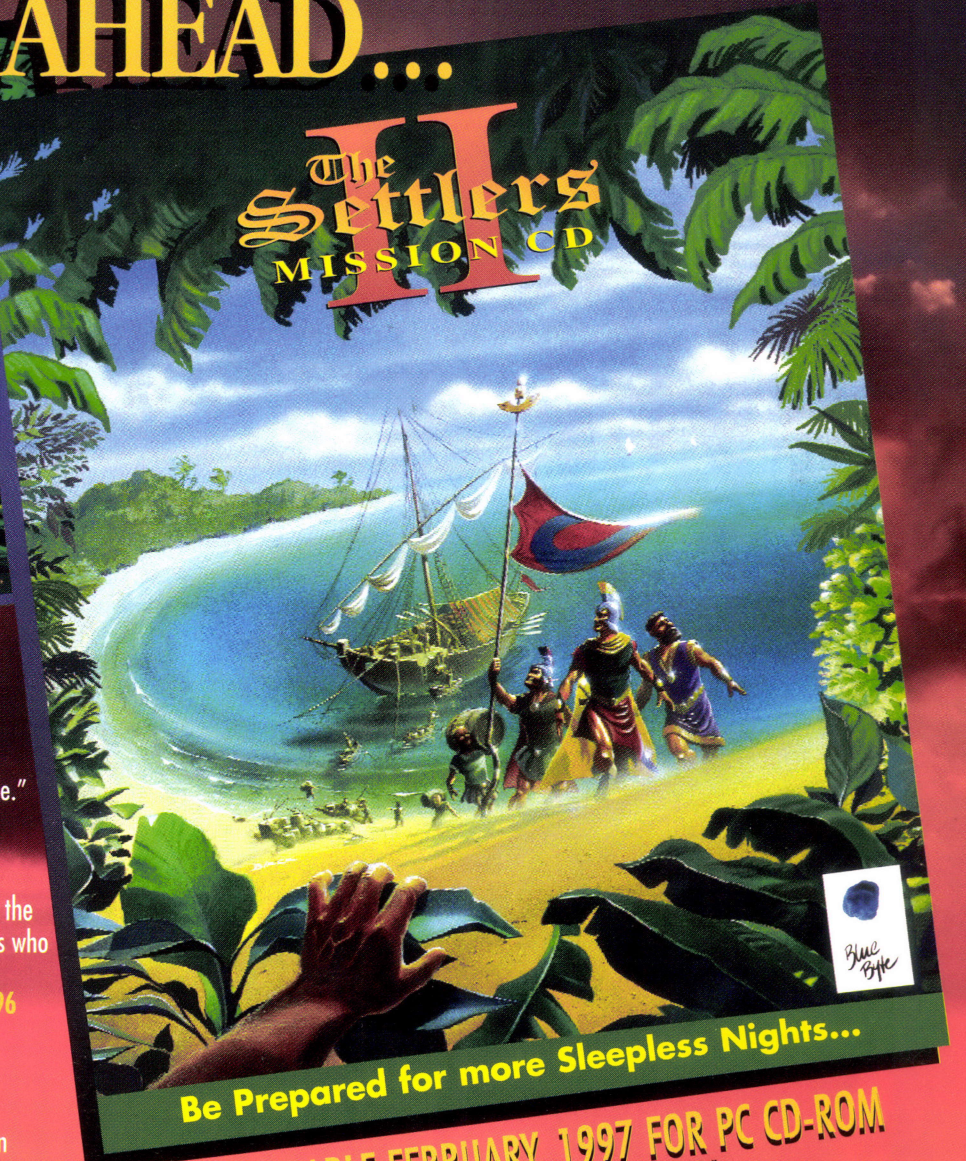
Missing Something?

If you are not getting the CD-ROM with your subscription to Computer Games Strategy Plus you are missing great demos and free games every month. You can upgrade your current subscription for only $2 more per issue. Visa or Mastercard are accepted, please call:

Customer Service
1.800.283.3542

MORE SLEEPLESS NIGHTS AHEAD...

The Settlers II
VENI, VIDI, VICI
"The fate of thousands is in your hands"


The Settlers II
MISSION CD
Blue Byte
Be Prepared for more Sleepless Nights...

AVAILABLE FEBRUARY, 1997 FOR PC CD-ROM

REQUIRES ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE SETTLERS II

A- THE CRITICS JUST LOVED THE SETTLERS II!

"Simply put, it is everything Serf City was, and much, much, more." "Part of the game's appeal is simply visual: The game map is incredibly detailed... This isn't just a game, it's a world." PC GAMES - July '96

"Those seeking the ultimate game to build the empire of their dreams, will need to look no further."
COMPUTER GAME REVIEW - April '96

"Settlers II has a very addictive quality and is an outstanding sequel..."
HAPPY PUPPY GAMES - (On-Line)

"Eye-catchingly unique... You don't want to miss this one."
C/Net - August '96

"A must for fans of the original and gamers who like god sims."
PC POWER - April '96

"A substantial improvement on an already excellent gaming system"..."should provide many long, long evenings of sheer bliss."
STRATEGY PLUS - June '96

NEW & UNIQUE!

Easy to Use Map Editor

A New Winter Scenario

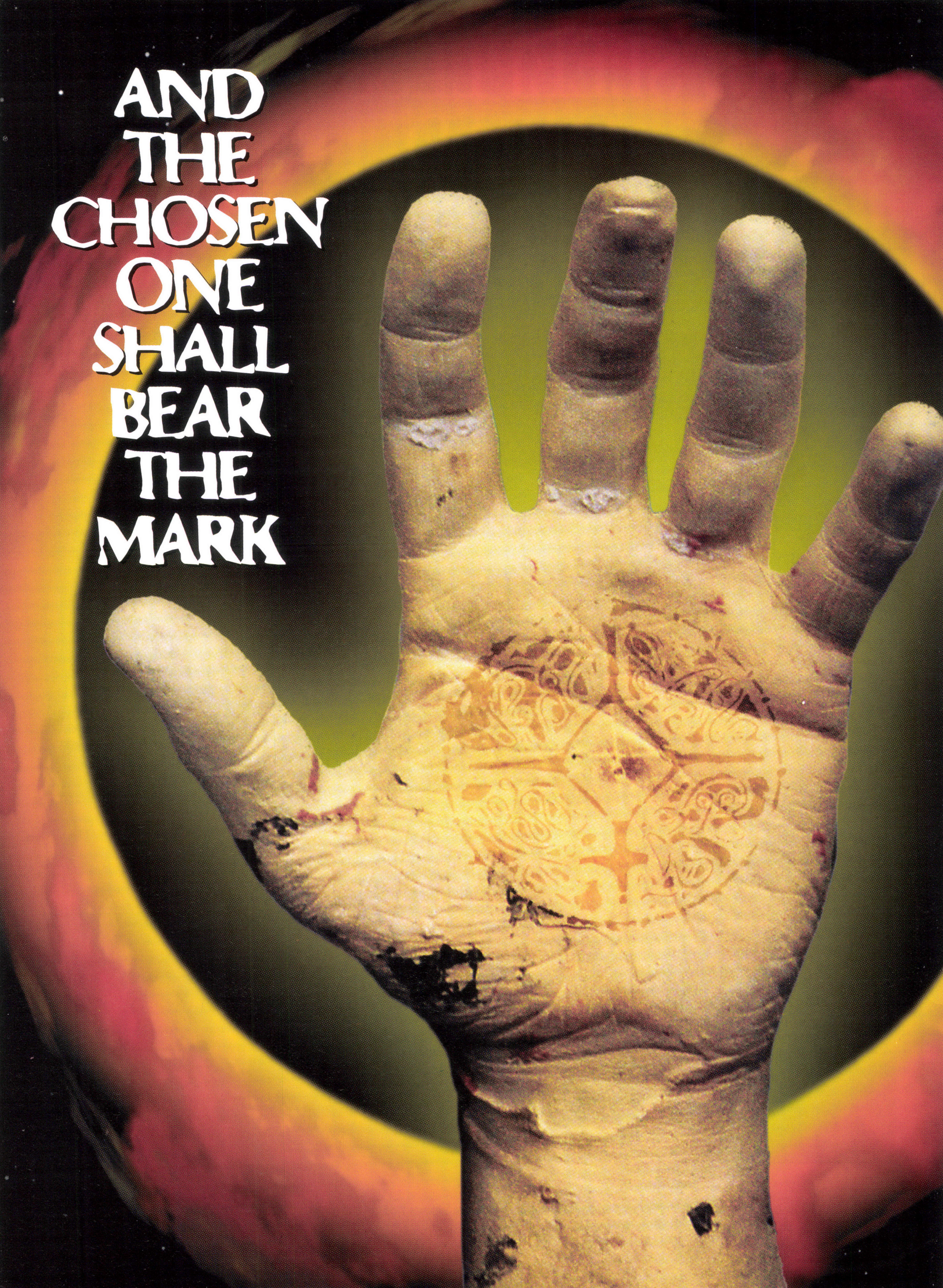
12 Additional Unlimited Maps

7 Continents Over 9 Detailed Maps

For more information about "The Settlers II Mission Disc" and other Blue Byte Software Products, visit our Web page or contact us directly at:
Blue Byte Software, Inc. • 870 E. Higgins Road, Suite 143 • Schaumburg, IL 60173 • Voice (847) 995-9951 Fax (847) 995-9956

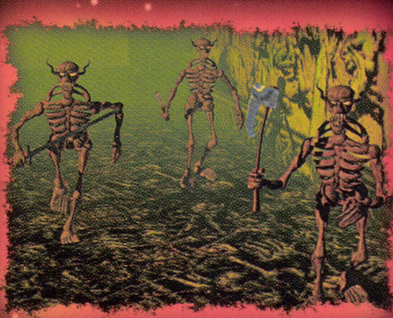
Blue Byte
www.bluebyte.com

© 1997 Blue Byte Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved

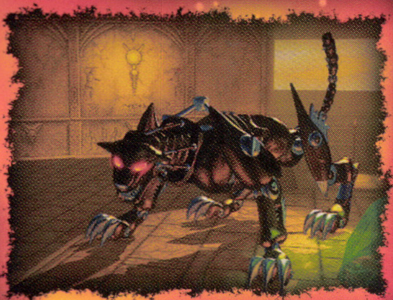

AND
THE
CHOSEN
ONE
SHALL
BEAR
THE
MARK

THE APOCALYPSE HAS BEGUN

All seven seals have been broken. Every evil that plagued the earth has become incarnate, disturbing the balancing force between good and evil, man and spirit.



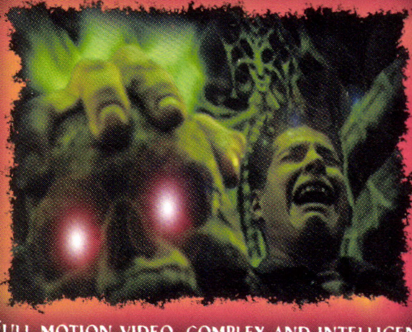
FRIGHTENINGLY DETAILED 3D ENVIRONMENT WITH INTERACTIVE OBJECTS AND PREDATORY DEMONS



ROOM UPON ROOM OF QUESTS, PUZZLES, BATTLES AND CHALLENGES.

Not only have you stumbled blindly into a nightmare, you've set the stage for the Apocalypse.
And now only one can stop it.
He who bears the mark. The chosen one. You.

Presenting a terrifying 3D adventure unlike anything you've experienced before. **Realms of the Haunting.** The forces of darkness are gathering for the final showdown.

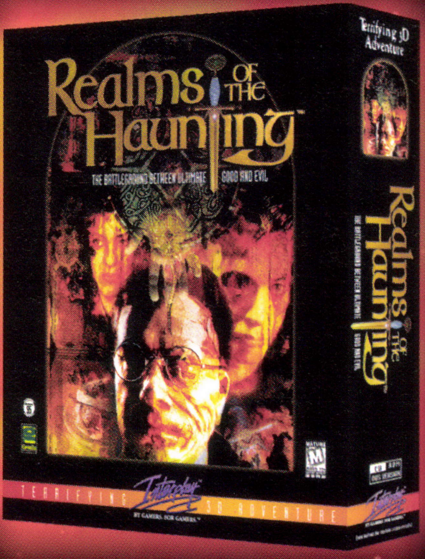


FULL MOTION VIDEO, COMPLEX AND INTELLIGENT PLOT BRANCHING AND MULTIPLE ENDINGS

- **OVER 600 INTERACTIVE OBJECTS INCLUDING MORE THAN 155 POSSIBLE INVENTORY ITEMS - MAPS, WEAPONS, AND MAGICAL OBJECTS.**
- **USER-DEFINED CONTROLS ALLOW CUSTOMIZATION OF ADVENTURE AND COMBAT LEVELS.**
- **SOPHISTICATED CHARACTER INTERACTION WITH A REAL-TIME, FIRST-PERSON, 360° 3-D ENVIRONMENT.**

Realms of the Haunting™

THE BATTLEGROUND BETWEEN ULTIMATE GOOD & EVIL.



AVAILABLE FOR PC CD-ROM

Interplay™
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

Gremlin Interactive

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

©1996 Gremlin Interactive, Ltd. All rights reserved. Realms of the Haunting and Interplay are trademarks of Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. Interplay is the sole publisher and distributor. Licensed from and developed by Gremlin Interactive, Ltd. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Great ideas, but...

Wretched excess on the web (and everywhere else)

As I write this at the beginning of the busiest time of the year for software releases, first I have to say, *thank you* everyone for putting together one of the most exciting years in computer gaming ever; more good and great games have released in the past few weeks, even, than most veteran PC game players could have hoped for over the course of two years, not so long ago. It's definitely Good Times for this medium right now, no matter how much griping, nay-saying or annoying stuff is out there as well.

Beyond that good news, though, there's still much happening which in the promotion sounds significantly more magnificent than it is in the execution.

My most immediate peeve at the moment is the virtual self-destruction I'm seeing in the area of the on-line electronic publication. I won't mention any names, but the Internet magazines with the highest profiles right now seem to have gotten way ahead of themselves, ahead of the technology, and ahead of what I think most users would actually like to see. Far be it from me to argue against a wholly online publication; it would be an exciting, useful, up-to-the-minute medium if done right. But the "hottest" (at least according to their own advertising) website Internet mags suffer from something much more profound than endless, wasteful load times; they almost all look like the aftermath of a tornado near a confetti factory.

Not that this isn't occurring everywhere else on the Internet, too (and in the magazine industry; I *hate* the new look of *Natural History*!), but the problem seems to be most painful at games-related sites; it's as if the people developing all the buttons, tabs, Java scripts, controls, flashing lights, real-time audio and other doo-dads have ganged up and targeted online gaming magazines as the main display case for all their wares – and all at the same time.

The net effect, other than the mysterious experience of watching your modem's RX light stay on almost continuously while nothing happens on-screen most of the time (assuming your modem's external; if not, watch the modem icon on your task bar), is headache. Eyesore. It's just plain ugly. It's kind of like waking up in the nightmare space alien version of the corrupted town George finds in *It's a Wonderful Life* in his "what if I never lived" mode, with way more lights flashing, people screaming, things moving, stuff honking. *Why are you doing this, people?* If anyone wanted to convince someone *not* to use the Internet, this would be a good place to start.

Think of it this way. What if, to read the magazine you're holding in your hands right now, you had to wait each time you turned the page for each ad to load (an average of 10-20 seconds at 28.8, let's just say for ballpark figures), with about ten ads per page, before you could start reading the text? What if, say, you could start reading right away, but your page kept moving, or shifting, or having images pop up all around and inside the text while you were trying to read? What if your page got broken up into six different "frames," each one scrollable, and you started scrolling in one, pointed to some item of interest and then found yourself off in magazine spread la-la land, with your previous place in the magazine entirely lost until you hit six "back" buttons to get back to where you were?

Maybe it's an Attention Deficit Disorder Victim's Dream Come True, but this way of putting together online publishing is a complete nightmare for the rest of us who can think for more than twelve seconds at a stretch. Here's an old saying which used to be tired, but which has obviously been working out and dieting and getting back into shape recently: *just because you can do something, doesn't mean you* have *to.* Remember it – it's the Comeback Kid of the New Millenium. In the cybernet right now, we're in the near-21st century equivalent of the worst of Victorian Aesthetic Excess. The first online publishing website which cleaves to a Shaker Aesthetic instead gets my complete vote of confidence.

Now be thankful you're holding a paper magazine in your hands, dear reader; in the time it's taken you to read this page, your neighbor next door just had the wonderful techno-experience of watching three more Java scripts for ads load. I hope you found this mumble just a little more engaging.

Along similar lines, in the Magnificent-in-Promotion-but-Where's-the-Beef? Category is the current rage some of our paper sisters have to claim "Exclusive!" this and "First Look!" that for almost everything they're doing (we've had to resort to this to remain competitive). It won't be too long until we see "Four Out of Five Doctors Recommend" on the cover of the next telephone-book sized computer gaming issue. I don't want to disenchant any fans of these magazines, in case they're reading this, but – in many cases it happened here first, like literally months ago. Anal retentives among you out there can riffle through back issues and verify this claim. And we haven't been groaning on about it, either; we just *did* it.

Hey, everybody: get rid of the frass and get back down to work. You're getting too hysterical. Peace.

– Steve Wartofsky, Editor

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS

www.cdmag.com
BPA International membership applied for May 1995

Publisher	**Yale Brozen**
Managing Editor	**Steve Bauman**
Editor	**Steve Wartofsky**
Associate Editors	**Scott Udell, Cindy Yans**
Demo Wrangler	**Peter Smith**
Production Director	**Ed Mitchell**
Creative Director	**David Powell**
Art Director	**Terri Davis**
Technical Director	**Doug Davenport**
Production Assistant	**John Collins**
Ad Director	**Russ Hoefer** **Tel: 847-441-6452** **Fax: 847-441-6584**
Regional Advertising Managers	**Jeff Mather** **East Coast, Midwest** **Tel: 802 767-9144 X531** **Fax: 802 767-1124**
	Jeff Lubetkin **AZ, NM, NV, S. CA, TX** **Tel: 818 222-7516** **Fax: 818 222-7518**
	Pete Abruzzo **IL, N. CA, OR, UT, ID, WA, N.W. Canada** **Tel: 847-441-6473** **Fax: 847-441-6584**
Circulation Director	**Alan Brush**

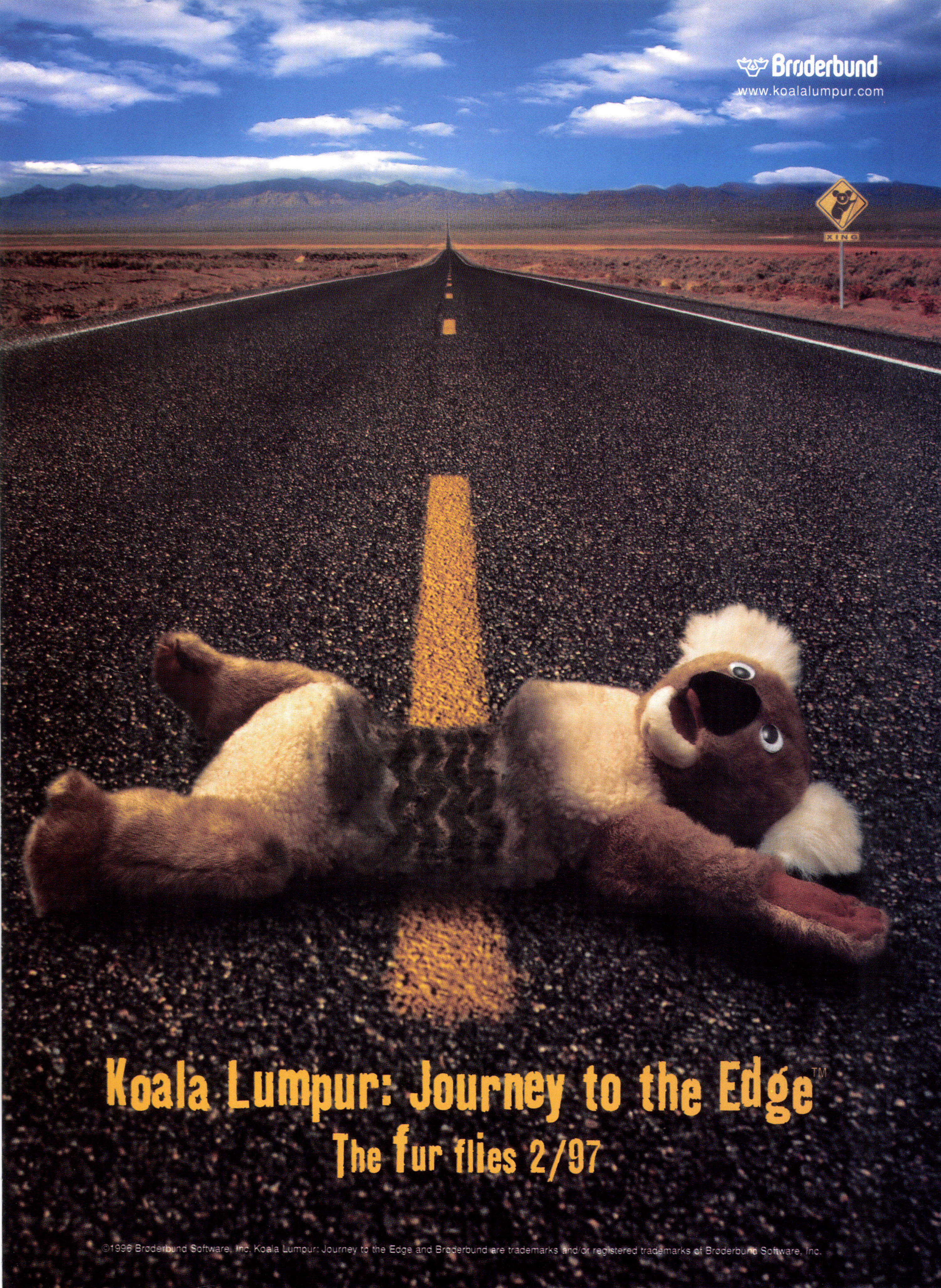
Reprints available. Foreign reprint rights available

US Subscriptions	**Tel: 800 283-3542** **or 201-627-2997** **Fax: 201-627-5872** **P.O. Box 3000** **Denville, NJ 07834**

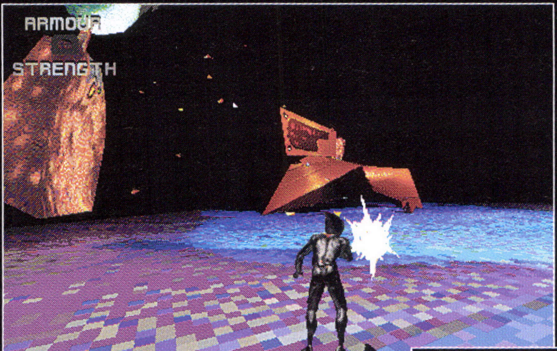
One year (12 issues) without/with CD-ROM

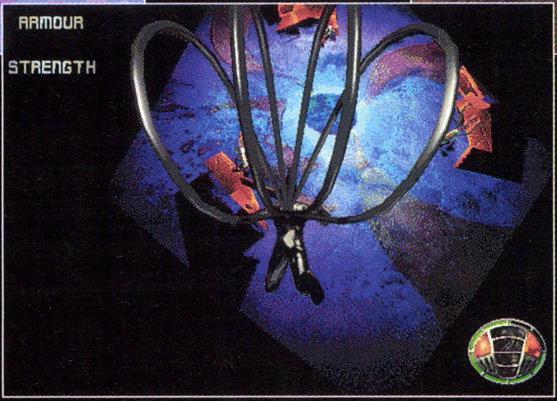
Basic subscription rates	**US: $19.95/$31.95** **Canada: $31.95/$43.95** **Foreign: $43.95/$55.95 (US)**
Distributors UK	**Comag: Tel: 0895-444055**
US	**Kable News: Tel: 212-768-1000**
IPD	**Tel: 800-999-1170**
Ingram	**Tel: 800-627-6247**
Cover	**iF-22 ASF from I-Magic** **Artist: Dru Blair**
Editorial Offices	**2 Millet Street, Unit 2** **Richmond, VT 05477** **Tel: 802-434-3060** **FAX: 802-434-6493**
CompuServe	**76711,347**
Internet	**splus@together.net**
Back issues available from	**Tel: 800-699-4263**

© 1996 Strategy Plus, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. Unsolicited submissions become the property of Strategy Plus, Inc. If you want to make a submission, please contact one of the editors.


Brøderbund
www.koalalumpur.com
XING
Koala Lumpur: Journey to the Edge™
The fur flies 2/97

©1996 Brøderbund Software, Inc. Koala Lumpur: Journey to the Edge and Brøderbund are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Brøderbund Software, Inc.





"MDK promises 3-D technology so cool and action so...realistic that it will send everything else running for cover."
– PC GAMER

"...futuristic 3-D action/ adventure that could set a new standard for PC Gaming."
– PC GAMES

ON A GOOD DAY, ONLY 2.5

"There are too many innovations...to list here."
– COMPUTER PLAYER

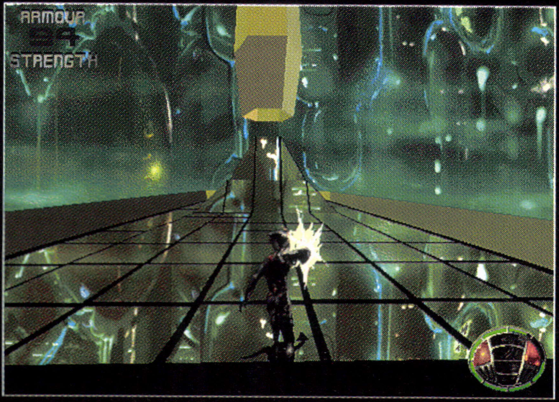
"This highly anticipated title is certainly one of the slickest games we've seen...could be the action fest to rival Quake."
– BOOT

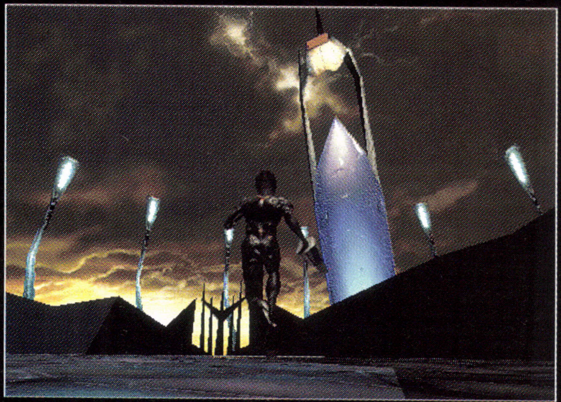
ARMOUR
10
STRENGTH

RATING PENDING
RP
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD

PC CD-ROM

Created by Shiny Entertainment, Inc. © 1996 Shiny Entertainment, Inc. MDK is a trademark of Shiny Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. Artwork and design © 1996 Playmates Interactive Entertainment Inc. PIE™ is a registered trademark of Playmates Interactive Entertainment Inc. All rights reserved.

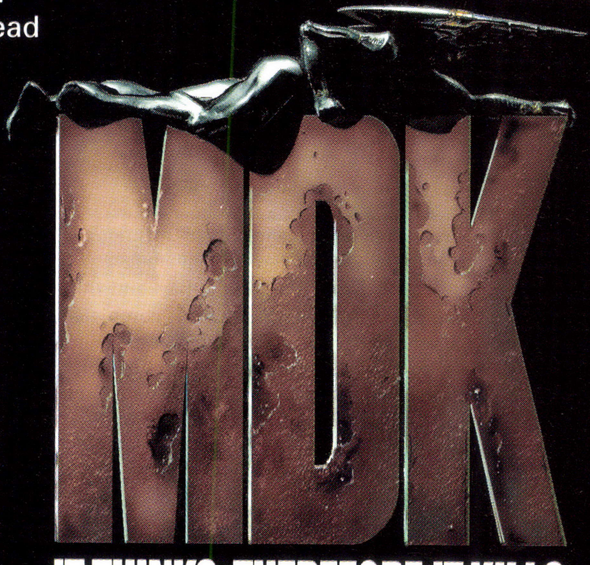




Your planet is being bulldozed by the ton. Six massive mobile mining cities, controlled by a force that nobody can stop, are strip mining the Earth's surface, overrunning and crushing anything in its path. Unless you can stop them.

BILLION PEOPLE WILL DIE.

- Unbelievable 3-D graphics, adrenaline-pumping gameplay and extremely fluid movement through a massive and wide open playing environment.
- Over 60 arenas of play spread out over 6 mobile cities.
- Over 60 hours of gameplay.
- A fully reactive program intelligence where enemies think, listen and communicate in a calculated assault on your life.
- An arsenal of innovative weapons and equipment including:
  - A helmet-mounted sniper rifle with vision goggles – target enemies from over two miles away.
  - A living polymer suit that protects from piercing projectiles.
  - A high-tech reusable parachute.
  - Bombs...decoys... homing sniper grenades... and many more.



IT THINKS. THEREFORE IT KILLS.

COMING MARCH 1997

Windows '95 and DOS on one CD.
http://www.playmatestoys.com

Shiny Entertainment™

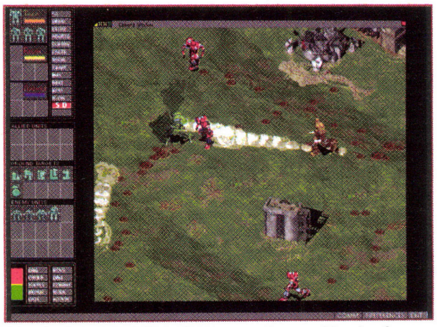
PLAYMATES INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT
PIE

611 Anton Blvd., Suite 500
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
(714) 428-2100

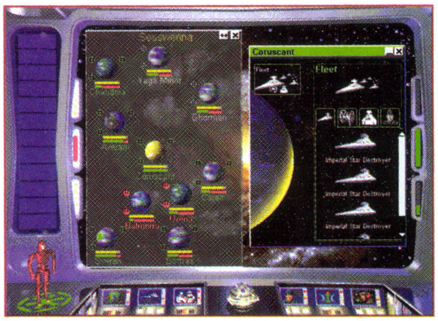
1997 coming into focus

New stuff on Mech Commander, Quest for Glory V and EarthSiege 3

MICROPROSE HAS FINALLY released screen shots of its upcoming FASA-licensed game, *BattleTech: Mech Commander*. In the game you'll control a unit, or "lance" of BattleMechs as you attempt to oust the forces of Jade Falcon Clan from your planet. Gameplay takes place in real-time (as with *Command & Conquer*), but should involve more long-term strategy as you attempt to manage build up your initially weak forces from battle to battle.



Mech Commander: Command your Mechs from a different perspective



Rebellion: Coruscant,heart of the Empire, is well defended by the familiar Star Destroyers

Lucas Arts has also released more shots up their upcoming *Star Wars* strategy game, *Rebellion*. The game will use the rich *Star Wars* universe–complete with characters, star systems, and, of course, weapons system–as a backdrop for the game. You'll take on the role of leader of either the Rebellion or the Empire as you struggle for control of the systems of the galaxy. These shots were not available in time for our December cover story on the game. – *Scott Udell*

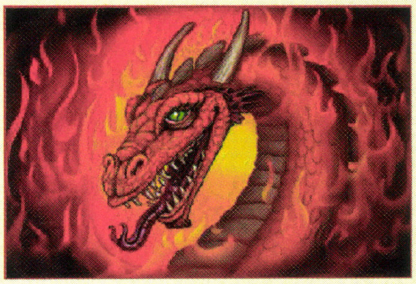
Quest for Glory Dragon Fire

So you still want to be a hero?

FIRST LOOK SIERRA ON-LINE, the king of knowing how many sequels to pump into the mainstream, announces that in Summer 1997 it plans to release the next *Quest for Glory* title. This will be the fifth title in the *Quest for Glory* series and will challenge players (again) to undertake a deadly, dirty, somebody's-gotta-do-it job fraught with assassins, hydras, gargoyles and other familiar hero-busting villains.

The setting is Silmaria – a land that desperately needs a new leader since its old Patrician has died. You dole out campaign buttons and bumper stickers, make a few infomercials, but alas, it will take more than shoddy politics to prove that you are the hero for the job. Instead you'll find a way to enter the Hidden Grotto and find an entrance to the underground city. You'll use magic to reveal the hidden treasure of Poseidon. You'll find many who will need your help and will encounter old friends such as the Liontaur Paladin, Rakeesh and the weird and powerful Erasmus to help you on your way.

Dragon Fire will be a real-time role playing adventure with combat in a 3-D scrolling world. Multiple difficulty levels, multiple character playability, and multi-player game support will enhance your next (but probably not final) quest to tackle the hero-portrayal biz and come out on top. – *Cindy Yans*



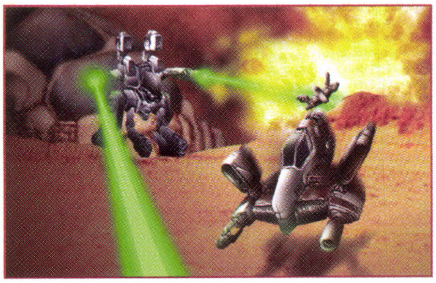
Will this series catch up with Leisure Suit Larry? Time will tell

EarthSiege 3

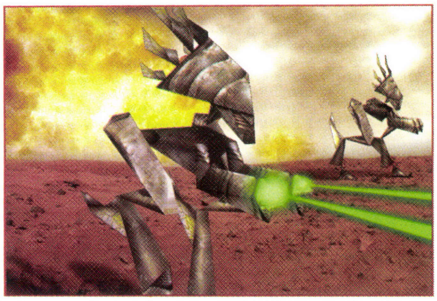
Sierra's plans to set the battling robots genre on fire

FIRST LOOK IF YOU'VE BEEN enjoying *Mission Force: CyberStorm* and *EarthSiege 2*, you've probably been wondering whether Sierra/Dynamix will ever integrate the fun of each style of HERC combat into a single product. While the early news on this game makes no promises on offering total play in both first-person robot combat simulation and third-person tactical gaming modes (we wish), there *is* mention of including a *CyberStorm*-style mission generator for the next generation of *Earthsiege* game. That means the top gets blown off the limits on the number and style of missions players will have available. The mission planner should thus be able to generate an almost infinite variety of missions for play.

The other two major areas for updating in this sequel will be the 3D graphics and the multi-player capability. Sierra plans complete 3D hardware support for *EarthSiege 3*. In multi-player, up to 20 gamers should be able to battle things out from either the human or Cybrid perspective.



This mock-up shows a 'bot getting wasted



These early rendered scenes illustrate the look that the graphic designers are aiming for

New units for the next generation of HERC technology will include tank, aerospace and hovercraft fighters. You will fight them on land; you will fight them in the air; you will fight them at sea. Could be amazing.

Finally, the crack Dynamix in-house team responsible for previous games in the Earthsiege universe will join up with such stellar talents as David Bischoff (episode writer for *Star Trek*™), Tim Flaherty (of *Batman Forever* fame), and veteran Producers and Directors Ken Embery and David Selle. This addition suggests a major expansion in the areas of background story and gameworld development.

Keep your eyes out for more info and hot screenshots on this exciting new game as it moves closer to its currently planned 3rd quarter 1997 release. – *Steve Wartofsky*

COMANCHE® 3

THE FLIGHT IS SIMULATED,
THE ADVENTURE IS REAL.

ALL NEW TECHNOLOGIES SET A
NEW STANDARD FOR REALISM

Comanche 3
RAH-66

NOVA LOGIC™

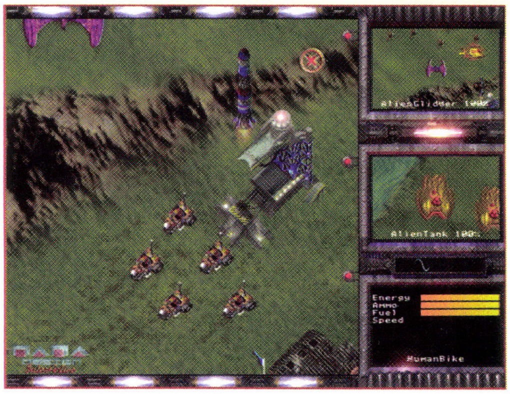
VOXEL SPACE 2

1-800-858-1322 VIP Code SP

Comanche is a registered trademark of NovaLogic, Inc. Comanche 3, RAH-66, Voxel Space, Voxel Space 2, NovaLogic and the NovaLogic logo are trademarks of NovaLogic, Inc. Copyright 1996 NovaLogic, Inc.

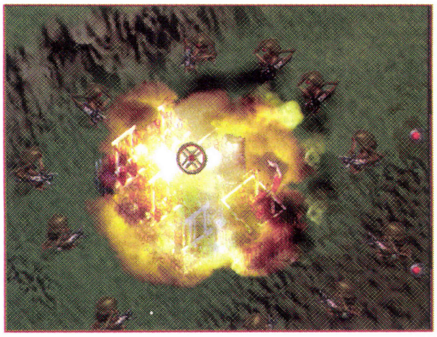
Conquest Earth

Attack of the gaseous morphing aliens of Jupiter!

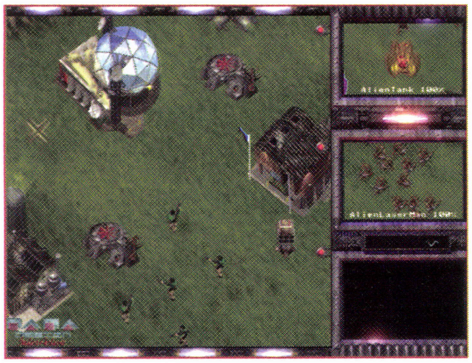


A guarded gantry gets its rocket off

FIRST LOOK HEARKEN BACK TO the days of 1950s Saturday matinees and the sci-fi "B" movies of the time… remember how it was always the Martians attacking? Almost 40 years later we know the best chance for Martian life seems to be a microbe, and darned if it isn't hard for a microbe to hold a ray gun. Where, then, are we to go for an alien race bent on Earth's destruction? For the upcoming game *Conquest Earth,* Eidos, who just delivered the superb *Tomb Raider* (see page 90) would have us turn our eyes toward Jupiter: it seems that the gas-filled society floating in Jupiter's upper atmosphere took the *Galileo* descent probe as an assault on their race, and have decided to do something about those nasty solid creatures on the third planet. In true alien menace fashion, they plan to descend upon the Earth, killing off humanity and converting the atmosphere into a much more pleasant sulfur mixture.



A structure gives under concentrated bombardment



Guarding your base against an incoming alien assault

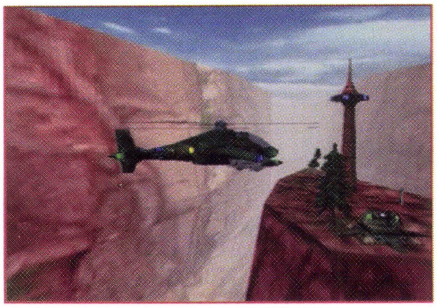
Gamers take on either side in this real-time strategy game. As humanity you'll attempt to stop the superior Jovians with your military forces and new weapons like air purifiers (and perhaps a Mac laptop with a virus?); as the Jovians, you'll have to fight off the barbarian hordes and their nasty "hard"-ware with your "fluid, gaseous, morphing machines," all the while protecting your atmosphere generators. Eidos claims the game "explores the arcade action element for instant gameplay… with strategy undercurrents for depth, variety and longevity." Current plans call for an increase to 16-bit (65,000) color, which means that, if nothing else, *Conquest Earth* should look smashing. – *Scott Udell*

BRIEFS… A metal cat of a different color? – SSI has confirmed that work has begun on ***Steel Panthers III***. Instead of Gary Grigsby, however, a team in India will be doing the development. The only information available at press time was that the game will cover combat operations across an extended period (reportedly from World War I through the year 2000), and that it will be based on a completely new engine. Work has also started on ***War Wind II***… **TalonSoft shifts line-up** – TalonSoft has informed us that instead of ***Prelude to Waterloo***, ***Napoleon in Russia*** (*i.e.*, the battle of Borodino) will be the next of their Napoleonic titles. *Prelude* may still be released late next year, but perhaps as an add-on or in a ***Waterloo Deluxe***

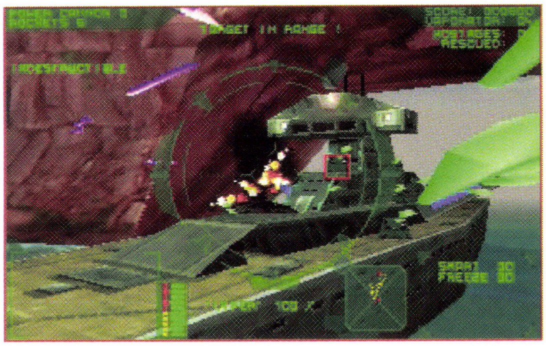
Extreme Assault

It's what happens when you give a bunch of Germans a big helicopter

FIRST LOOK THOSE WACKY FOLKS at Blue Byte just can't get enough of that 3D action. You have the superbly wet and wild *Archimedean Dynasty* getting rave reviews from gamers around the world. Now you have them coming out of their watery gravy with *Extreme Assault*, a modern, 3D version of *Choplifter*, with rescuing and killing, all with breathtaking 3D graphics.



This is not a rendered or accelerated shot

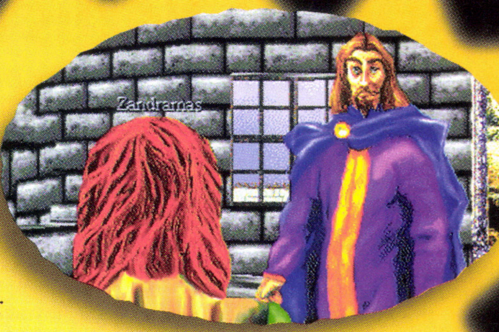


Don't expect a sim with this one - it's a pure arcade shooter

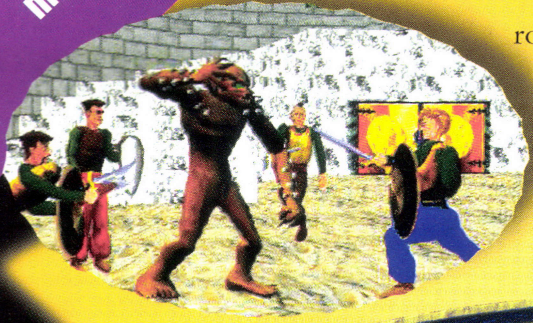
The "plot" of the game puts the player in the cockpit of a helicopter and tank as you try to rid the world of an alien race that plans to take over the Earth and use it for its own no-doubt evil purposes. You must rescue kidnapped scientists and destroy the aliens' atmospheric transformation facilities. Weapons include lasers, missiles and the always fashionable smart bombs. Occasionally that chopper won't do, so it'll be up to you to pilot a good old tank to wipe out those pesky aliens.

After spending some time with the game in London back in September, it clear that the 3D engine is superb, with 16-bit color (65,000 colors) and high-resolution graphics that run at a smooth frame rate. An assortment of graphic flourishes, like transparent smoke, should provide the 3D *grognards* plenty to talk about, while the rest of us will just think it looks really groovy when you fly through the various underground caves, icy crevices, tree-filled environments (yes, you can shoot them, and they catch on fire just like *Magic Carpet*) and past Incan cities. – *Steve Bauman*

Play FREE!
Download Today
meridian.3do.com/trial/

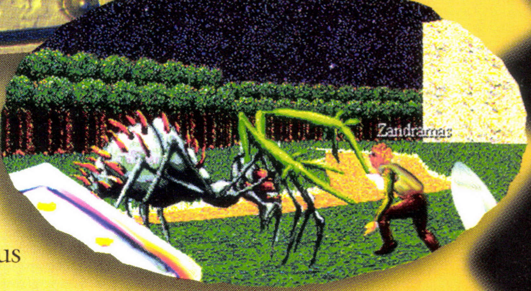


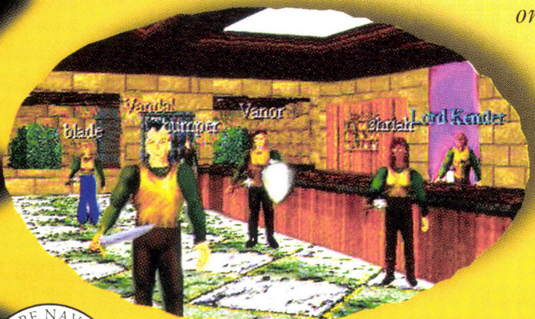
MERIDIAN™ 59 is waiting. It's waiting for you to log on to the first *next generation* role playing game on the Internet. It's waiting for you to succumb to the addiction of its uncertain, medieval time. Thousands of crafty players await you online – each a brave explorer living a second life in this continually evolving, wonderful dimension. Fantastic monsters, clever characters, and special events arrive and surprise with every passing day. Each to confront, challenge and confound you. The perilous quest lies ahead! See you in the game. *Visit your favorite retailer or to order direct, dial 1-800-336-3506.*



Next Time Someone Tells You To Get A Life, Tell Them You've Got One.

Meridian 59. Online.




Vandal
blade
Vanor
Lord Kender

Requires SLIP/PPP Internet connection. Retail product includes 30 day free play time. 3DO, the 3DO logos, Studio 3DO and Meridian 59 are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of The 3DO Company. Netscape Navigator and the Netscape Navigator Included logo are trademarks of Netscape Communications Corporation. All other trademarks and/or registered trademarks are the properties of their respective owners.
© 1996 The 3DO Company. All rights reserved.

STUDIO 3DO
The First-Ever Internet-Based 3D MUD
Play FREE
MERIDIAN 59
PC
INTERNET CD-ROM
the Internet Quest Begins

NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR INCLUDED

TEEN AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

BEST BUY

EGGHEAD

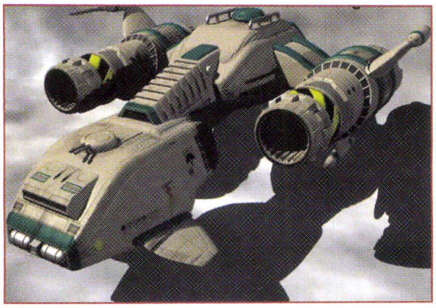
STUDIO 3DO

COMPUSA THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

Mission to Nexus Prime

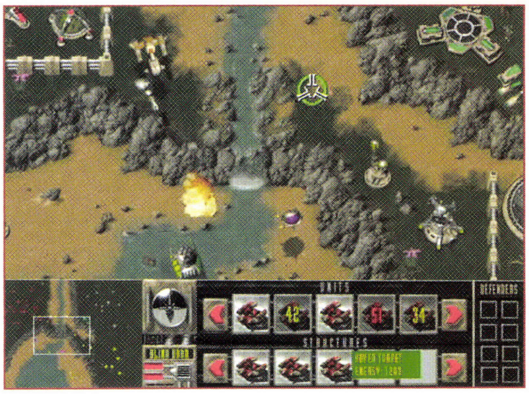
Real-time strategy on a faraway planet

FIRST LOOK WITH THEIR BLOODY adventure game *Harvester* barely out the door, developer DigiFX (formerly Future Vision) is already gearing up for their next project, *Mission to Nexus Prime*, a real-time strategy game akin to *Command & Conquer* or *Warcraft II*. While the storyline behind the game hasn't been revealed, DigiFX is trumpeting the fact that it is being written by Hugo Award winner Timothy Zahn (best known for his *Star Wars* novels). Gamers will take the side of either the UEH (United Ethos of Humanity) or the alien Rossh, in actions across four terrain types: desert, arctic, tropical, and volcanic. Unlike earlier games in the genre, the terrain in *Nexus Prime* will provide "a dynamically changing environment," with lava eruptions, quicksand, cracking ice, etc.



One of the more powerful UEH units

DigiFX plan 25 unit types, 20 installations, and 40 missions (20 per side), arranged in a linear format around Zahn's storyline. Missions may include searching ruins, seek and destroy activities, rescue activities, and base and air defense. The company promises that they "have 'tricked out' *Nexus Prime* like no other title," and while they won't go into details at this time, they say that "we focus 'heavily' on the real-time action side of the game." Elements include "transporter pads, secret agents/saboteurs, surrounding collateral damage," etc.



Note the waterfall, an example of the dynamic terrain

A rendered Rosh warrior

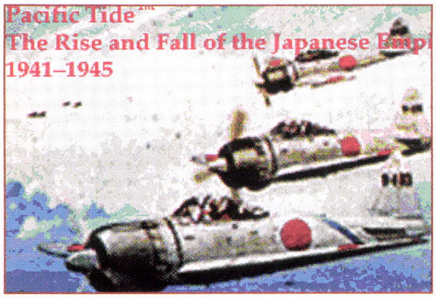
A variety of multiplayer options will be available, including Internet play and eight player gaming through DigiFX's free in-house server system. Maps can display in resolutions from 640x480 up to 1280x1024, and a full mission editor (with a random generator option) will be included. While Virgin will be publishing the game overseas, by early November no US publisher has been announced. DigiFX plans to release a demo in mid-Winter, with the final game due out early this Spring. – *Scott Udell*

package. The future of **Battleground: Middle East** is now fuzzy; after an initial surge of interest, gamer response has turned luke-warm to the title... **NeoStar sells assets** – A month after announcing that they were going to sell of their assets, NeoStar, parent company of **Software Etc.** and **Babbages**, did just that, selling 447 stores and all of its inventory to Software Acquisition Company LLC. That company is headed by Leonard Riggio, a director and stockholder of NeoStar and a principal stockholder of Barnes & Noble, Inc., the nation's largest bookseller. Over 200 Babbages and Software Etc. Stores will be closed as a result of the sale... **Blue Byte on a budget** – BlueByte has launched a new label, **PlayByte**, in order to distribute low-cost

Pacific Tide

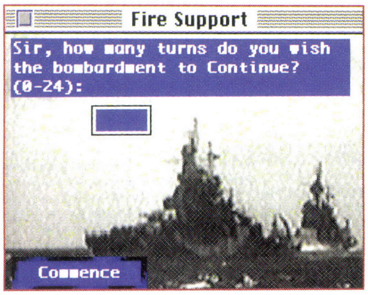
Star Games sails alone in their strategic-level game of warfare

FIRST LOOK PACIFIC TIDE, A massive strategic-level game of warfare in the Pacific theater during World War II, will be self-published by developer Star Games. Because of the break with Arsenal and the coincident loss of support funding, Star Games is following a slightly different tack with the game; plans now call for the release of *Pacific Tide Limited Edition* for the Mac (PC version following shortly) sometime in the first half of 1997 (priced around $35), followed later on by a Limited Edition version of the Scenario Editor for $15-$25. The *Limited Edition* will allow include the operational model, but will only portray individual scenarios and "some short campaigns." The full Pacific campaign will have to await the *Theater Edition*.


Pacific Tide™
The Rise and Fall of the Japanese Empi
1941–1945

The artwork of Robert Carlin will be featured

Despite these apparent limitations, the features Star Games is promising for the *Limited Edition* are extensive: full air operations (including land and carrier-based aircraft, float planes, night air ops, *kamikaze* and *taiatari* attacks, pilot fatigue, etc.), naval operations (up to 21 missions for task forces, amphibious assaults, ASW, underway replenishment, etc.), ground operations (28 ground units, seven special warfare skills, etc.), and a very detailed-sounding leadership and command structure. The follow-on scenario editor will "come with a very large database of ships, aircraft, [ground units], leaders, geographical locations, and installations."

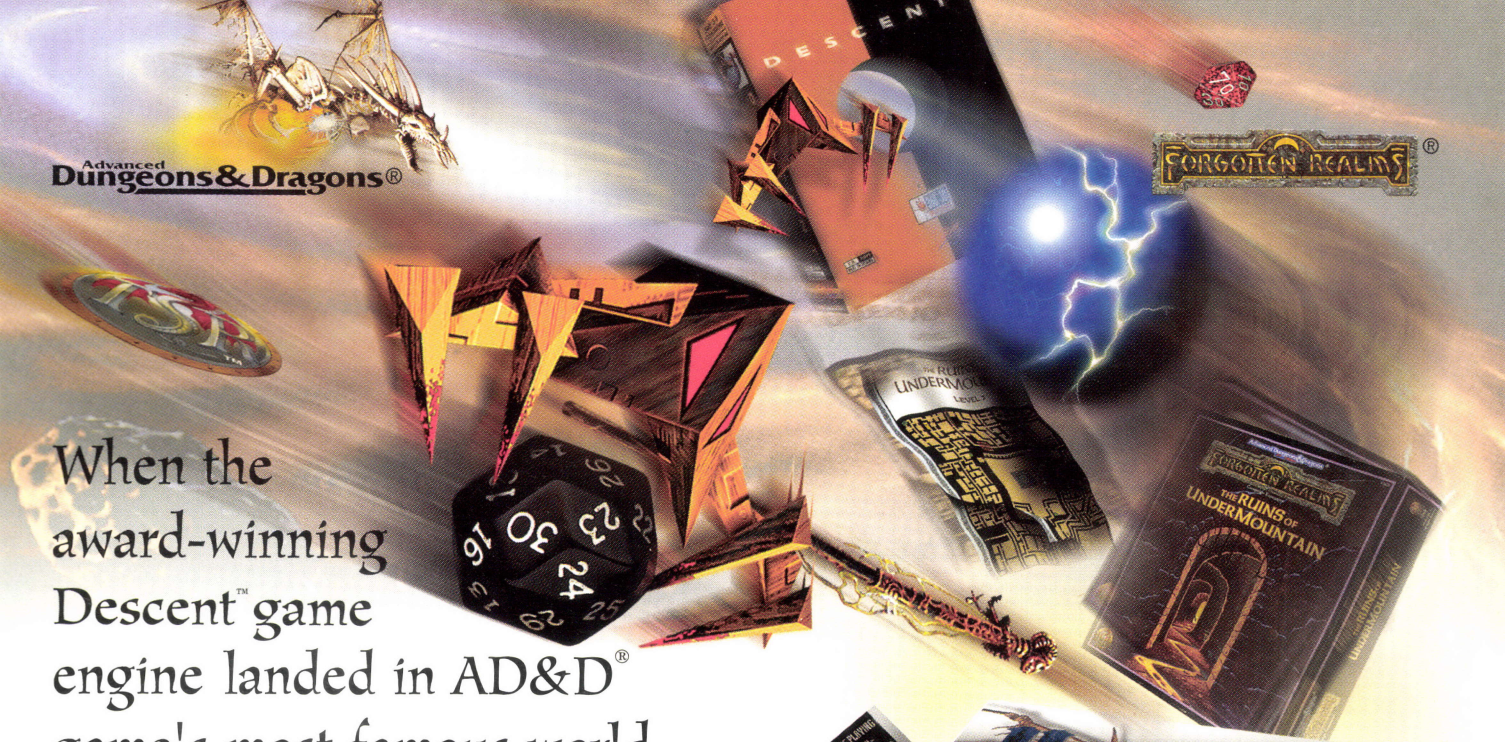


Fire Support

Sir, how many turns do you wish the bombardment to Continue? (0-24):

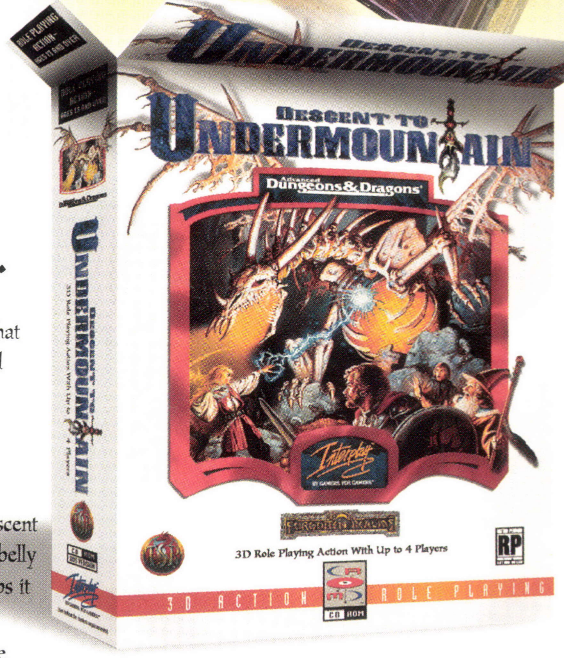
A preliminary dialog shows the level of detail involved

Currently, Star Games is not making any commitment to the release of the full *Theater Edition* due to "the vast amount of work the research requires to get it done right." Gamers will be able to order the various versions of *Pacific Tide* through Star Games' web site, **www.pactide.com**. – *Scott Udell*


Advanced Dungeons&Dragons®
Forgotten Realms®
DESCENT
THE RUINS OF UNDERMOUNTAIN
LEVEL 1
FORGOTTEN REALMS
THE RUINS OF UNDERMOUNTAIN
TSR

When the award-winning Descent™ game engine landed in AD&D® game's most famous world, the FORGOTTEN REALMS®...

...it left in its wake the most revolutionary new RPG game to date.

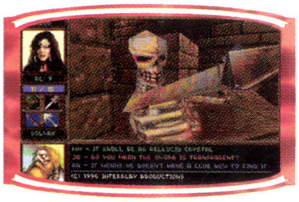

DESCENT TO UNDERMOUNTAIN
Advanced Dungeons&Dragons
Interplay
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.
FORGOTTEN REALMS
3D Role Playing Action With Up to 4 Players
3D ACTION ROLE PLAYING
CD ROM
RP
ROLE PLAYING ACTION
TSR

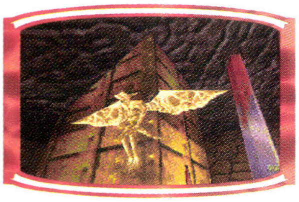
All the wizards and magicians in the Realms could never have predicted what happened that mystical night in the dungeons of Undermountain. After all of their spells, conjuring,and attempts to see the future, the future literally crashed down upon them. With deadly force.

It left an indelible mark. It affected their vision. Their movement. Their way of life and death. It changed their history as well as their future.

Introducing DESCENT TO UNDERMOUNTAIN™, the most revolutionary new AD&D® FORGOTTEN REALMS action RPG game in centuries. Based on the hugely successful Descent engine, the dark inhabitants of Undermountain's stone belly now experience 3D vision and 360° movement. Perhaps it was the strange visitor from the future. Perhaps just the trauma. But multiple characters are now developing in the cracks and under the rocks of ancient caves.

All of this, along with multiple player options has forever changed the face of the AD&D® FORGOTTEN REALMS world. What came down from the hereafter that fateful night, is certain to continue down into history. And down. And down. And down.


IT SHALL BE AS PELLUCID CRYSTAL
DO YOU MEAN THE SWORD IS TRANSPARENT?
IT MEANS HE DOESN'T HAVE A CLUE HOW TO FIND IT
(C) 1996 INTERPLAY PRODUCTIONS



- THE AWARD WINNING DESCENT™ MEETS THE MOST FAMOUS AD&D® WORLD, THE FORGOTTEN REALMS®
- FULL 3D, 360° FIRST PERSON ACTION BASED ON THE HUGELY SUCCESSFUL DESCENT™ ENGINE
- CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN OVER 20 DIFFERENT MAGIC-RIDDEN DUNGEON LEVELS
- FIRST AD&D® ACTION RPG WITH UP TO 4 PLAYER MODEM/NETWORK OPTION

DESCENT TO UNDERMOUNTAIN™

Available on PC CD-Rom

Download the interactive preview at www:interplay.dragonplay.com

TSR
Interplay™
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

©1996 Interplay Productions. INTERPLAY is a trademark of Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. Licensed and distributed by Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. DESCENT TO UNDERMOUNTAIN, ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, AD&D, FORGOTTEN REALMS, and the TSR logo are trademarks of TSR Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

RATING PENDING
RP

SURRENDER IS NOT

Command & Conquer: Red Alert is a trademark of Westwood Studios, Inc. Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. © 1995,1996 Westwood Studios, Inc. All rights reserved.

THE EXPLOSIVE NEW STRATEGY GAME FROM THE CREATORS OF MILLION-SELLER COMMAND & CONQUER

Super VGA Graphics* intensify realism and excitement

Multiplay features include Internet Head-to-Head* and 8 player IPX

Fight over land, sea and air. Thirty new units and structures to choose from including MIGS, spies, destroyers, submarines and more

Now battle maps are twice as large

Over forty missions to play and dozens of multiplayer maps

Two CDs – one for you and one to lend to your favorite victim

Create and trade battle maps with new terrain editor

Three game difficulty settings

Dozens of close-ups and action movies

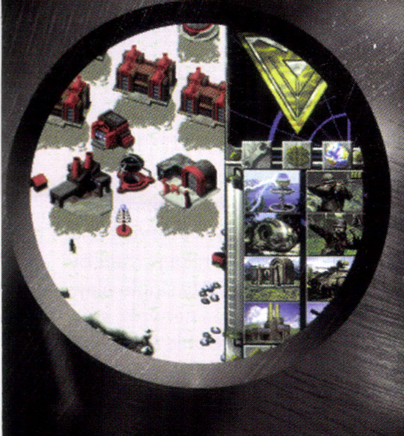
Internet access tonight!* Play against competitors across the world with Westwood Chat**

*Windows ®95 version only
**Requires existing Internet access

COMMAND & CONQUER
RED ALERT™
All the power. None of the responsibility.

Available now for
Windows®95 & DOS CD-ROM

Westwood™
STUDIOS
www.westwood.com

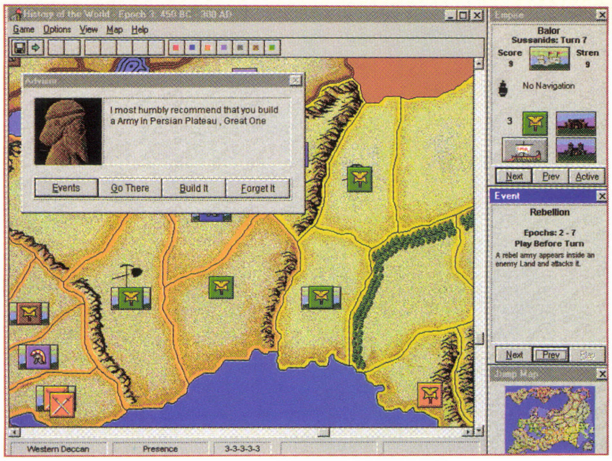


COMMAND & CONQUER
RED ALERT
TARGETING
Westwood STUDIOS
TEEN
ESRB

History of the World

Around the world in four millenia

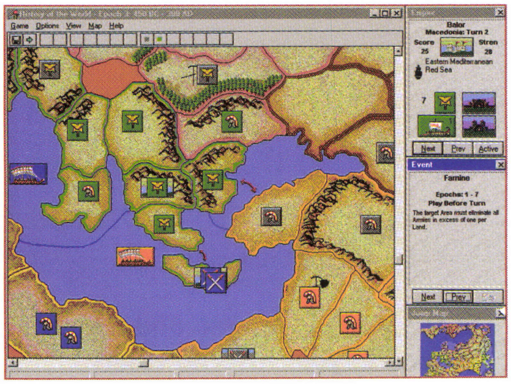
FIRST LOOK AVALON HILL AND developer Colorado Computer Creations (the folks who brought us *High Command*) have been hard at work translating Avalon Hill's popular boardgame, *History of the World*. A turn-based game of growing civilizations, *History of the World* covers the huge swath of documented human history, from the Sumerians up to the start of World War I. While there will be a computer opponent, multiplayer gaming (two to six players) – either "live or by e-mail" – will probably be the big draw with this game, and some of the features being talked about certainly seem to support it: a built-in e-mail interface which, if it works, will be almost as flexible as a real-time chat system; a playback feature which lets you play back step-by-step moves or whole turns, epochs, or even entire games up to the point the replay was saved, all at varying speeds.


History of the World - Epoch 3: 450 BC - 300 AD
Game
Options
View
Map
Help
Advisor
Events
Go There
Build It
Forget It
Empire
Balor
Sussanids: Turn 7
Score 9
Stren 9
No Navigation
3
Next
Prev
Active
Event
Rebellion
Epochs: 2 - 7
Play Before Turn
Jump Map
Western Deccan
Presence
3-3-3-3-3

I most humbly recommend that you build a Army in Persian Plateau, Great One

A rebel army appears inside an enemy Land and attacks it.

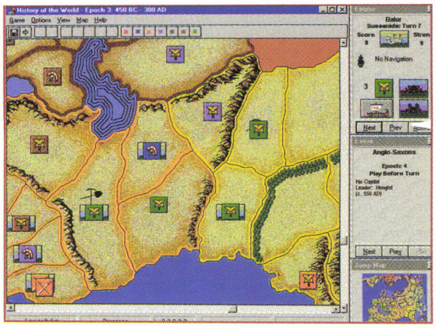
You advisor - ignore at your own peril


History of the World - Epoch 3: 450 BC - 300 AD
Game
Options
View
Map
Help
Empire
Balor
Macedonia: Turn 2
Score 25
Stren 28
Eastern Mediterranean
Red Sea
7
Next
Prev
Active
Event
Famine
Epochs: 1 - 7
Play Before Turn
Next
Prev
Jump Map

The target Area must eliminate all Armies in excess of one per Land.

Imagine that — it's not a real-time strategy game

World conquest is the primary name of this game, as you move armies and fleets across the map of the Earth. Any organized army needs a civilization to support it, and *History of the World* will include cities, monuments, and royal advisors to help would-be world emperors on their way. Aside from your enemies, Mother Nature will be a potent force (especially to the Ancients), as she throws up disasters like famine, plague, and flood. Barring an "End to History" (or a production delay) the Windows-based *History of the World* should release early in 1997. – *Scott Udell*


History of the World - Epoch 3: 450 BC - 300 AD
Empire
Balor
Sussanids: Turn 7
Score 9
Stren 9
No Navigation
3
Next
Prev
Anglo-Saxons
Epochs 4
Play Before Turn
No Capital
Jump Map

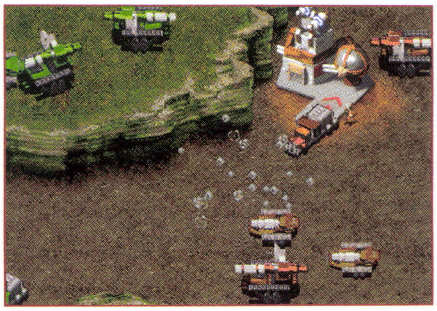
There is a certain crispness to the images which are oddly appealing

software (in the $9.99-$19.99 range). The first two releases will be *Chewy, ESC from F5* and *Dr. Drago's Madcap Chase*, a cartoon adventure and a multiplayer game respectively... **Clancy playing games** – Author Tom Clancy has formed a company, Red Storm Entertainment, to develop 3D games for the PC and the Internet. This team is made up of people who worked on *Tom Clancy SSN*, the recently released game. The first two games, due in 1997, will be a geopolitical strategy game and some sort of science fiction title. Terrifyingly enough, USA Today quoted an analyst who's obviously quite in-touch with the fans of Clancy and their gaming habits when he said, "His thrillers could make great *Myst*-like simulation/strategy games." ...

Krush Kill 'n' Destroy

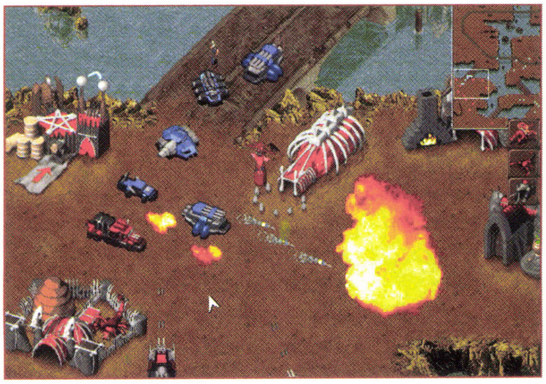
Real-time strategy in a post-apocalyptic world

FIRST LOOK KRUSH KILL 'N' DESTROY (*KKND* to its friends)...the title kind of says it all, doesn't it? A new strategy game, developed by Beam Software and being published by Electronic Arts in the US, *KKND* posits a world where survivors of some un-detailed apocalyptic conflict emerge from their "years underground" to find a world even worse off than before they entered their bunkers. They run head-on into the Mutes who, according to Beam, "are keen to introduce them to a new way of life. And a whole lot of grinning, evil death."



Battling across a post-apocalyptic landscape

There you have *KKND* in a nutshell. The high-tech forces of the remnants of humanity will go head-to-head with the variegated (and very violent) hordes of Mutes, fighting across "an intricately detailed, post apocalyptic landscape, featuring the ruins of battle-scarred cities populated by ravenous mutant beasts" (hmmm, sounds like the *CGS+* office after someone's brought in donuts). The demo included on this month's CD hints at a sci-fi/demonic theme reminiscent of *Doom*, and Beam promises "a black sense of humor" and "a gritty and realistic plot."



This looks like some game... can't put my finger on it...

Game play is similar (very similar? *Extremely* similar?) to that of *Command & Conquer*, although the graphics are SVGA and the user interface more streamlined, thereby revealing more of the map. Thirty single player missions are planned, as is network support for up to six players. Electronic Arts plans on a Spring release. – *Scott Udell*

The invasion begins early '97

FALLEN HAVEN™

The planet New Haven was supposed to be a paradise,
an idyllic, peaceful new home for colonists from Old Earth.
But that was before the wars broke out, before the provinces turned on one another...
and before the aliens arrived...

Windows® 95 CD-ROM Game

INTERACTIVE MAGIC™

P.O. Box 13491 • Research Triangle Park • NC 27709 • www.imagicgames.com

For more information call 1-888-232-5838

Fallen Haven is a trademark of Interactive Magic, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Power F1

Eidos tries their hands at the Formula One circuit

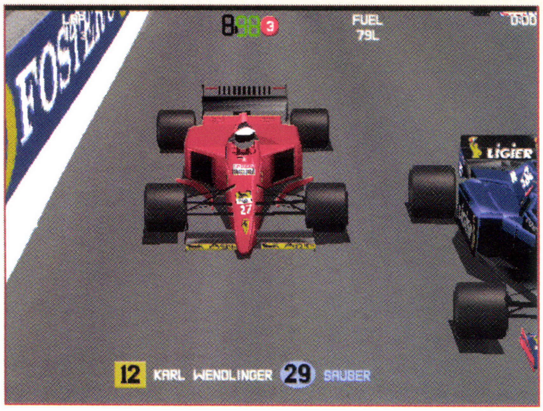
FIRST LOOK WITH MICROPROSE'S *Grand Prix 2* burning up the charts (well, in Europe, at least), it's not surprising to see a competitor. *Power F1*, from Eidos Interactive, looks to be an interesting competitor for Geoff Crammond's critically acclaimed racer, with less emphasis on hardcore realism and more on pure driving entertainment. In an early version of the game, it's already delivering quite a bit of the latter.

That's not to say this is a little arcade racing game. On the contrary, developer Teque has given their baby a force model designed by a "qualified engineer." It takes into account the torque at each wheel, the grip of the track surface (with weather effects accurately modeled), fuel load and aerodynamics.

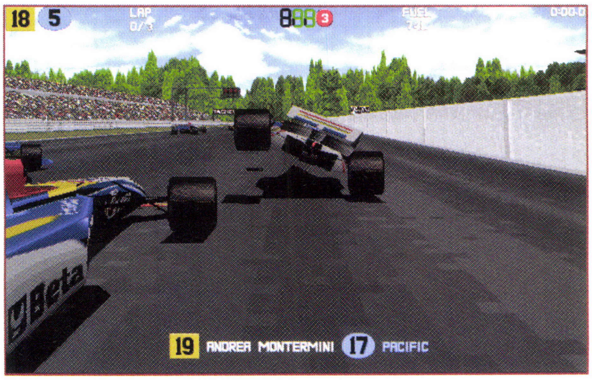
The game will ship with the 17 tracks and drivers from the 1995 F1 season, so you won't be able to be Villeneuve (but you can be Damon Hill). The tracks are accurate in layout, but Teque says some "artistic license" has been taken to make them more visually interesting.

Multiplayer options include a split-screen mode for two (er, with the difficulty of getting two PC controllers to work, this is an odd choice) and the more conventional network and modem play. This DOS-based game is already running rock-steady in its alpha version under Windows 95, a good sign.

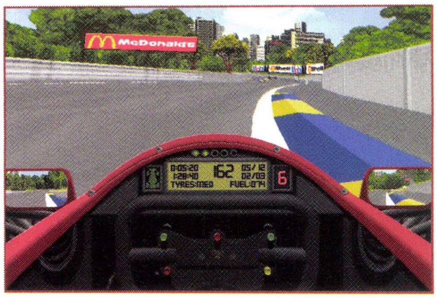
With a feature-set matching the leaders in the field (*Grand Prix 2, IndyCar Racing*), superb visuals which are already speedy in high resolution, and a solid car model (which is still undergoing final tweaking), look for *Power F1* to be a contender this spring. – *Steve Bauman*



Not your everyday Ferrari



Yeeeehhaaaawwww... gettin' airborne



A McDonalds sign at Adelaide? Gimme an Arch Deluxe to go, with extra grease

Hacked off at Maxis – In what is either a major embarrassment or a brillaint bit of guerilla marketing, Maxis has shipped 50,000 tampered versions of SimCopter. The versions of the game were allegedly hacked by now ex-Maxis employee Jacques Servin, who showed his opposition to the game's "heterosexism" by adding male "Sims" in swimsuits (or is that simsuits?) to the female pool of sims. The "controversy" occurs on any Friday the 13th when those strapping males start to kiss other males in the game. Allegedly he was not only offended by the decidedly heterosexual "simulationships" but also to what he perceived as the game's potrayal of female sims as "bimbos" (is that simbos?). No, we don't make this stuff up... ■

Historical Studies Group goes to war

Boardgame publisher goes electronic with Sheriden in the Valley

BOARDGAME PUBLISHER Historical Studies Group is working on a new regimental-scale series of games covering a wide range of Civil War conflicts. The first game in the series, *Sheridan in the Valley: The Battles of the Opequon and Cedar Creek*, should be out in boardgame format by Christmas, and the computer version sometime in the first quarter of '97. Each game will cover two complete battles (with multiple scenarios and variants for each battle); other battles being considered for coverage in future releases are Shiloh, The Wilderness, Savage Station, Seven Pines, Chickamauga, Murfreesburo, and, of course, Gettysburg (although it's not clear if all of these would be ported to the computer). Instead of using traditional turn-based movement and combat the designer, Keith Poulter, is considering an initiative-based system, and the complex leadership so important to Civil War gaming will be recreated in detail. The computer version of *Sheridan in the Valley* will duplicate the boardgame in almost every detail: rules, maps, and unit artwork will all be identical; the only additions will be an AI opponent and modem play. HSG is planning on releasing the game for both Macs and PCs, and will be setting up a web page to act as a meeting place for potential combatants. – *Scott Udell*

Redneck Rampage

A southern-fried shooter

FIRST LOOK JUST IN: INTERPLAY IS teaming up with Xatrix Entertainment (of *Cyberia* fame) to produce *Redneck Rampage*, a bizarre 3D shooter utilizing the Build 3D engine. Using larger textures and a more advanced character AI, this violent journey through trailer parks of the white and trashy should offend everyone. The soundtrack will include tunes from Mojo Nixon, Beat Farmers and The Reverand Horton Heat. Look for more next month. – *Steve Bauman*

THE WORLDWIDE
REPORTER

$ 1.39/ $ 1.69 Canada

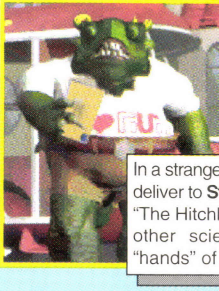
My Mail Was Lost—IN SPACE!

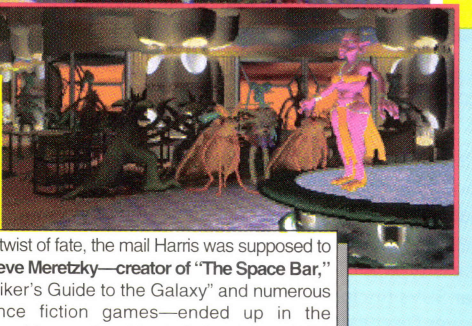
SHOCKING PHOTOS INSIDE!

Mineola mailman mind-melds with 30-legged space worm to save happy hour crowd from crazed killer!

MINEOLA, NY—Lucky Long Islander Pat Harris has encountered plenty of killer dogs on his postal route over the years, but never any killer space aliens—until now! **"I was just minding my own business,** delivering Mrs. Panayatocopoulos' mail when these space guys ask me if I want to go for a ride." Suddenly, Harris was transported to a bizarre bar full of creepy-crawly space critters! Then the wacky E.T.'s made Harris enter the minds of space port bar patrons—including a man-sized worm thing—to retrieve clues that ultimately led space police to a shapeshifting serial killer! Sadly, after returning from the minds of various insect-like aliens, Harris is left with a life-long legacy of flashbacks that cause him to eat maggots and simulate molting. But for Harris, it's a small price to pay for intergalactic glory!

"I want to go back to Armpit VI. There, I'm an intergalactic hero. But here, I'm just another disgruntled mailman that's been abducted by aliens," reveals sentimental galaxy-trotter Harris.





In a strange twist of fate, the mail Harris was supposed to deliver to **Steve Meretzky—creator of "The Space Bar,"** "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" and numerous other science fiction games—ended up in the "hands" of a wide-eyed resident of planet Armpit VI.

SEGASOFT™

www.segasoft.com

THE SPACE BAR™

Just another CD-ROM game where you're a psychic gumshoe detective trying to solve a murder by mind-melding with drunken aliens.

For a free Windows '95 demo or to order The Space Bar direct, call 1.888.SegaSoft

Designed for Microsoft® Windows®95 Mac OS

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developed by [Rocket Science] and [Boffo]

©1997 SegaSoft Inc. All rights reserved. Portions of The Space Bar©1997 Rocket Science Games, Inc. All rights reserved. Portions of The Space Bar. ©1997 Boffo Games, Inc. All rights reserved. SegaSoft and the SegaSoft logo are trademarks of SegaSoft Inc. Rocket Science and the Rocket Science logo are trademarks of Rocket Science Games, Inc. Boffo, the Boffo logo and The Space Bar are trademarks of Boffo Games, Inc.

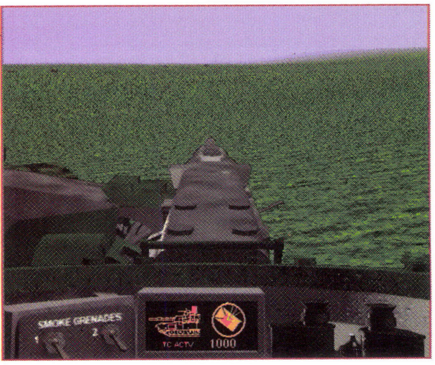
THE BETA ZONE

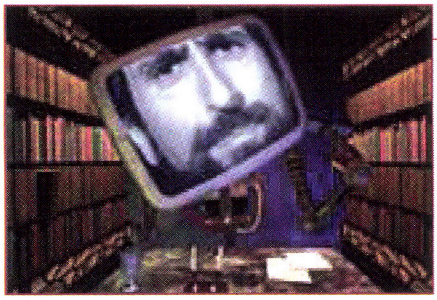
This section of the magazine updates you on pre-release versions of software. In some cases, the games are considered "reviewable" by their producers; however, we feel they are in some way incomplete. We will be giving a full review on these products in coming months.

iM1A2 Abrams

Interactive Magic

PREVIEWED BACK IN our September '96 issue (No. 70), I-Magic's *iM1-A2* has entered the internal beta stage at the time of this writing (mid-November). Most components are in the game and integrated, but designer Arnold Hendrick told us, "right now we're in the middle of optimizing the game for speed. … There [are] a variety of small, little things not going right or working at all…. We're close, but we're not there…." (an amusing current bug is that your tank will occasionally go airborne, flying along at speeds of 400+ kph–trying to catch up with *iF-22*, perhaps?). I-Magic and designers Charybdis have upped the graphics detail; in the beta we have, you can see 3D objects scattered about the terrain. Despite the little things left to clean up or assemble, though, the design seems pretty solid; I-Magic hopes to have it out before Christmas. – *Scott Udell*





Obsidian

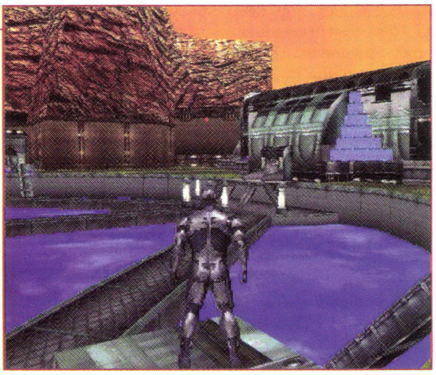
SegaSoft

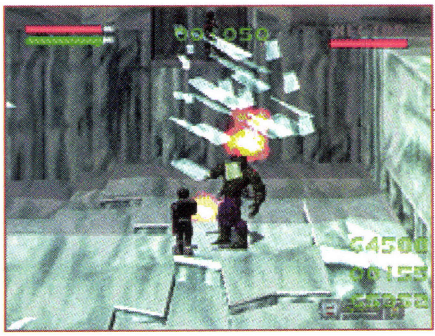
PLAYERS SITTING ON their hands and wallets until the arrival of *Riven: Sequel to Myst* might want to reconsider when *Obsidian* hits the shelves. An early look at this game has been far from disappointing. In fact, true potential abounds. You are Lilah, a research scientist who becomes engulfed in a search for her partner through five gorgeously rendered realms in an immense rock structure dubbed The Obsidian. Each realm is unusual in that it does not conform to the laws of physics as we know them. The haunting atmosphere, engagingly disorienting physical environment, seamless navigational transitions and clever puzzles all point to a stunningly riveting adventure. So, players of *Lighthouse*, *Timelapse*, *Shivers*, et. al., take notice. It appears as though some top-notch competition is jumping directly into the fray. - *Cindy Yans*

Esoteria 3

Mobeus

THIS NEWCOMER'S FIRST release is a third-person 3D shooter for Windows 95 that looks a bit like a more action-oriented *Terra Nova*, with a smidgeon of *Tomb Raider* thrown in for flavor. One thing which becomes apparent when playing the game is that the protagonist lacks the personality of *Tomb Raider's* heroine Lara Croft, with less animation and a derivative look. However, there's more emphasis on action, and the 3D environments move seamlessly from outdoor to indoor locations, without the usual "loading next level" pauses. While the technical skill of the 3D engine is obvious from screen shots, it comes at a price (it's clear why it's a hog – they render as far as the eye can see, with no fogging or pop-up). It's definitely one to watch for (check out the video on the CGCD). – *Steve Bauman*





The Incredible Hulk

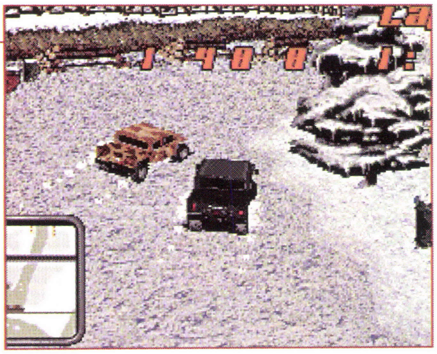
Eidos Interactive

HE'S BIG, he's mean, and he's green. With an imminent release for the PlayStation, Eidos' *Hulk* is a game which should feel right at home on that system. On the PC, it stands out as a single-minded pseudo-3D platform action game. Though not on par, technologically speaking, with their *Tomb Raider*, *The Hulk* does feature one of the greenest characters to ever grace the PC. Run around locations, flip switches, break stuff, kill things. You shouldn't apologize for liking this sort of stuff; the game itself makes none for being a pure brainless action game. Check out the video on the CD-ROM for a preview. – *Steve Bauman*

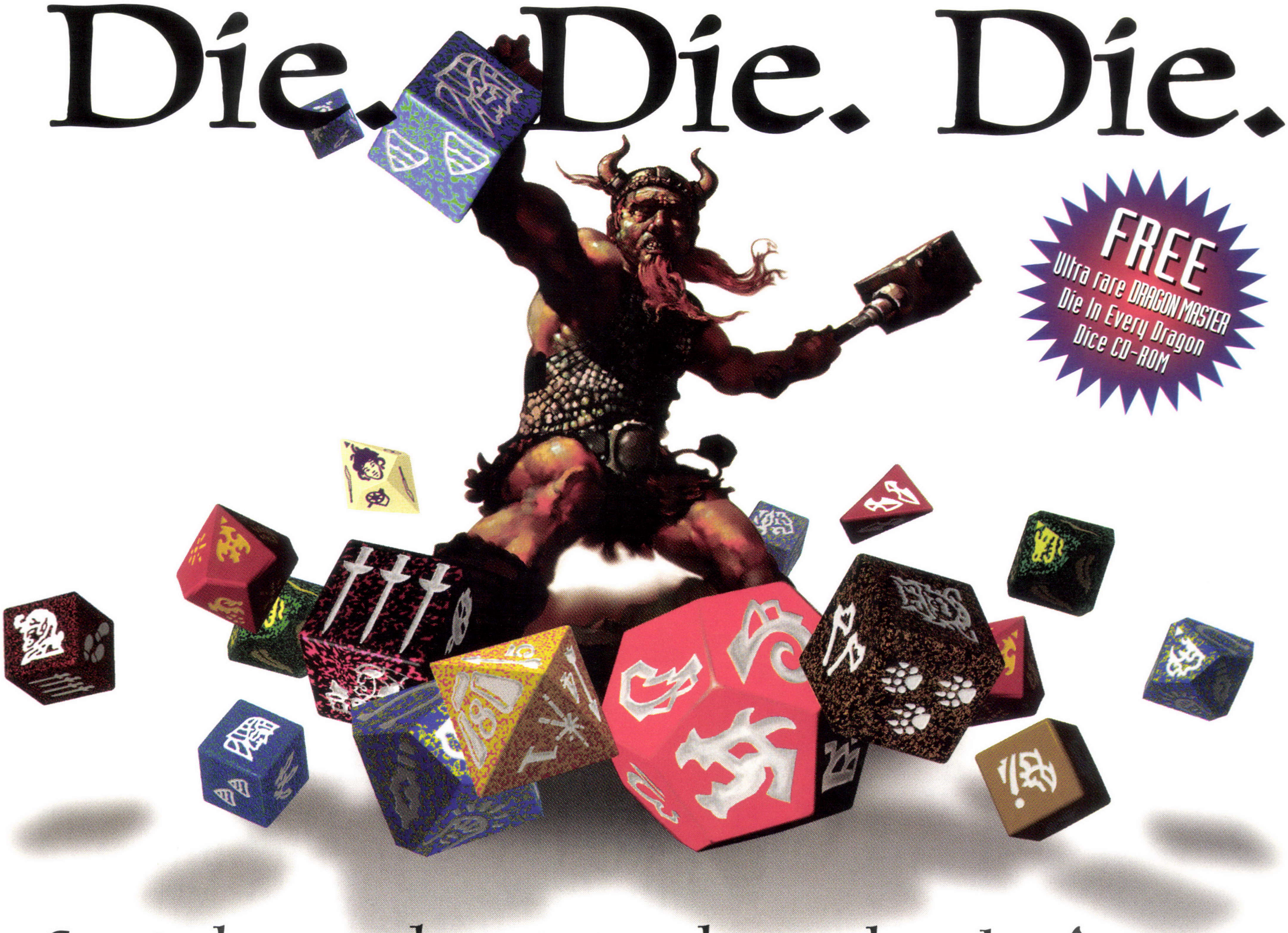
Test Drive: Off Road

Accolade

WHILE THE FINAL car models aren't quite in place, the latest *Test Drive* looks like dirty fun, with enough of a simulation-style car model to make this a competitor to *Monster Truck Madness*. The gameplay is typical of the genre; toss some popular SUVs (including a Jeep Wrangler, Land Rover Discovery and a trusty Chevy monster truck) around the usual assortment of muddy or snow-covered tracks, win races, tune your car, repeat as necessary. Mimicking *WipeOut*, Accolade has probably spent much money on the "hip alternative soundtrack™" by *Gravity Kills* (think *nine inch nails* crossed with *A Flock of Seagulls* – terrifying, but true). What their new-wavey, industrial-lite muzak has to do with off-roading is a mystery (how 'bout some Waylon Jennings?), but it does add a little to the adrenaline factor. – *Steve Bauman*



Die. Die. Die.



FREE
Ultra rare DRAGON MASTER
Die In Every Dragon
Dice CD-ROM

Survival comes down to two things, the role of strategy. And the roll of the die.

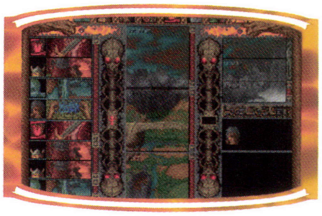
REAL TIME / STRATEGY
DRAGON DICE
Dungeons & Dragons
A fast and furious conflict between dice armies you build!
REAL TIME STRATEGY

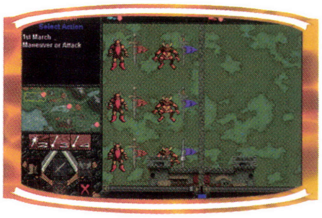
INTRODUCING *DRAGON DICE* ON CD-ROM. Not since the invention of the broadsword has there been a more realistic way to experience the pace of battle. The new CD-ROM version of TSR's blockbuster hit, DRAGON DICE, takes you on a dangerously realistic journey into one of the most challenging and popular fantasy dice games ever.

This animated DRAGON DICE adventure, begins in eons past, when the strength of the sword or the spell power of a sorcerer was the only difference between a glorious life, and a vicious, terrible death.

You'll have to use all 128 of the games built-in computer dice to build your own dice armies, to scout enemies, and to avoid traps. Plus, each DRAGON DICE CD-ROM comes with a limited and collectible, TSR sanctioned DRAGON MASTER die.

It's the most true-to-life dice battle of strategy you've ever encountered. But beware, because only the extremely talented, or the unbelievably lucky will survive.





Select Action
1st March
Maneuver or Attack

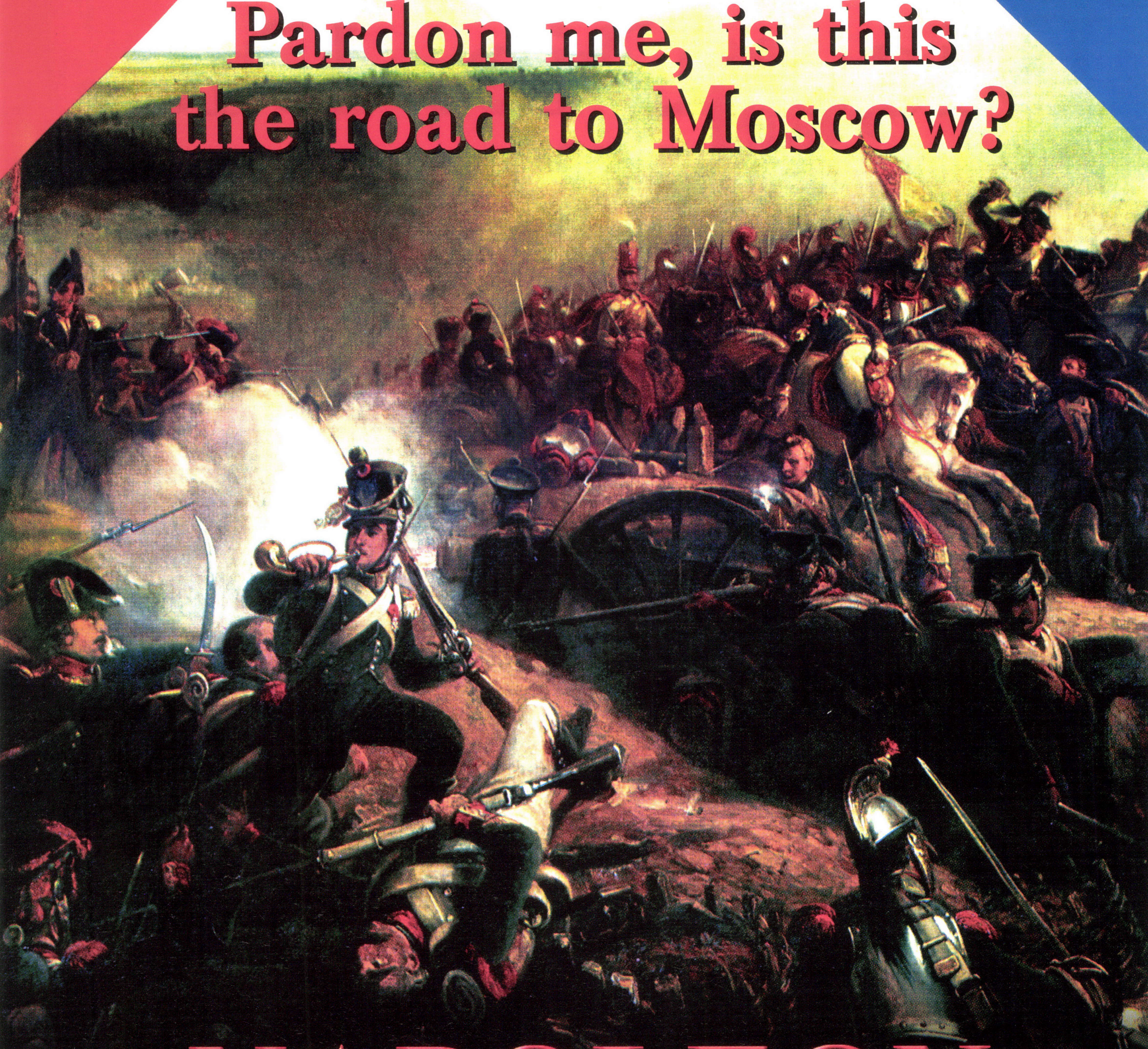
- BASED ON TSR'S BLOCKBUSTER STRATEGY HIT, DRAGON DICE.
- CUSTOMIZE ENDLESS ARMIES FROM EVERY DIE AVAILABLE FOR TSR'S ORIGINAL DRAGON DICE (ALL 128)
- SINGLE PLAYER OR A 4 PLAYER NETWORK MODE DRAWS YOU INTO THE RICH HISTORY AND STORYLINE OF AN ANCIENT AD&D® UNIVERSE
- BEAUTIFUL ARTWORK AND DICE -TO-CHARACTER ANIMATION BRING THE POPULAR DICE GAME TO LIFE, CREATING A RICH GAME PLAYING EXPERIENCE

Coming soon for Windows 95® Download the interactive preview at www.interplay.dragonplay.com

Check out TSR's DRAGON DICE game available now.

Interplay™
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™

DRAGON DICE™ and © 1996 TSR, Inc. Used by Interplay Productions under license from TSR, Inc. INTERPLAY is a trademark of Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. AD&D and the TSR logo are trademarks of TSR, Inc.
Windows 95® is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.


Pardon me, is this the road to Moscow?

NAPOLEON IN ЯUSSIA™

BATTLEGROUND 6

TalonSoft's award winning Battleground® series returns to the era of Napoleon and the titanic clash with General Kutuzov and his glorious Russian Army of the Czar at Borodino, September 7, 1812. Can you push the Old Guard forward and march on Moscow?

Diabolical Carnivores of Free Time™

TALON SOFT

Play Head to Head via modem

Play by E-Mail

PC CD ROM

www.talonsoft.com Available at fine Software retailers World Wide!

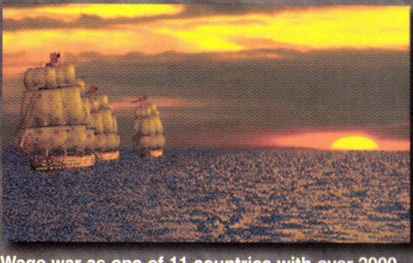
© Copyright 1995,1996,1997 TalonSoft Inc. P.O. Box 632 Forest Hill, MD 21050 (410) 933-9191

AGE of SAIL™

REAL TIME
Naval Warfare

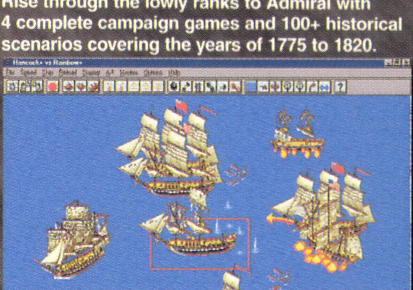
This ain't the *Loveboat*!

Experience all the grandeur and pageantry of the Tall Ships era...then blow 'em out of the water with a good stern rake!



Wage war as one of 11 countries with over 2000 ships of every rate, from Spain's massive 130 gun ship of the line to England's swift 10 gun cutters.

Rise through the lowly ranks to Admiral with 4 complete campaign games and 100+ historical scenarios covering the years of 1775 to 1820.



Pit your captain skills against a salty computer opponent, or take on your best friends in Head to Head play via a modem.

Diabolical Carnivores of Free Time™

TALON SOFT

PC CD ROM

www.talonsoft.com

Available at fine Software retailers World Wide!

© Copyright 1995,1996 TalonSoft Inc. P.O. Box 632 Forest Hill, MD 21050 (410) 933-9191

by Steve Wartofsky and Scott Udell

THE I-MAGIC HURRICANE

"Wild Bill" Stealey's company takes the industry by storm

In an era when many of the smaller, independent publishers are either disappearing or are being sucked up into big software conglomerations, you'd hardly expect to see the appearance of a new company, focused on the hard-core gamer, but that's just what Interactive Magic is. Formed by computer game industry veteran J.W. "Wild Bill" Stealey and Robert Pickens in 1994, I-Magic jumped into the gaming scene in a big way in 1995 with the release of games like *Apache* and *Capitalism*. They've continued the trend in 1996 by signing a deal resulting in the release of *Air Warrior II* (the boxed version of the popular on-line game), by releasing the *Apache* follow-on *Hind* and their second in-house game, *Destiny* (a *Civilization*-style game which has had some teething pains), and by repackaging several hard-core wargames (*American Civil War* and *Harpoon Classic '97*). For the rest of '96 and on into '97, they will continue their two-fisted strategy of producing simulations (like *iM1-A2 Abrams* and *iF-22 ASF*, sims for both the casual and the hard-core player) and strategy/war games (*Fallen Haven*, *Semper Fi*), and will move increasingly towards the world of on-line gaming (you hear "on-line" everywhere you go at I-Magic; it's so important that "3D Internet" has been added above the phrase "Strategy & Simulation Gaming" on I-Magic business cards).

In the midst of a busy production schedule, I-Magic invited *CGS+* down to look at several of their newest titles and to meet with some of their development and production teams (the staff has just about doubled in '96 to some eighty people, with plans to add many more over the coming year).

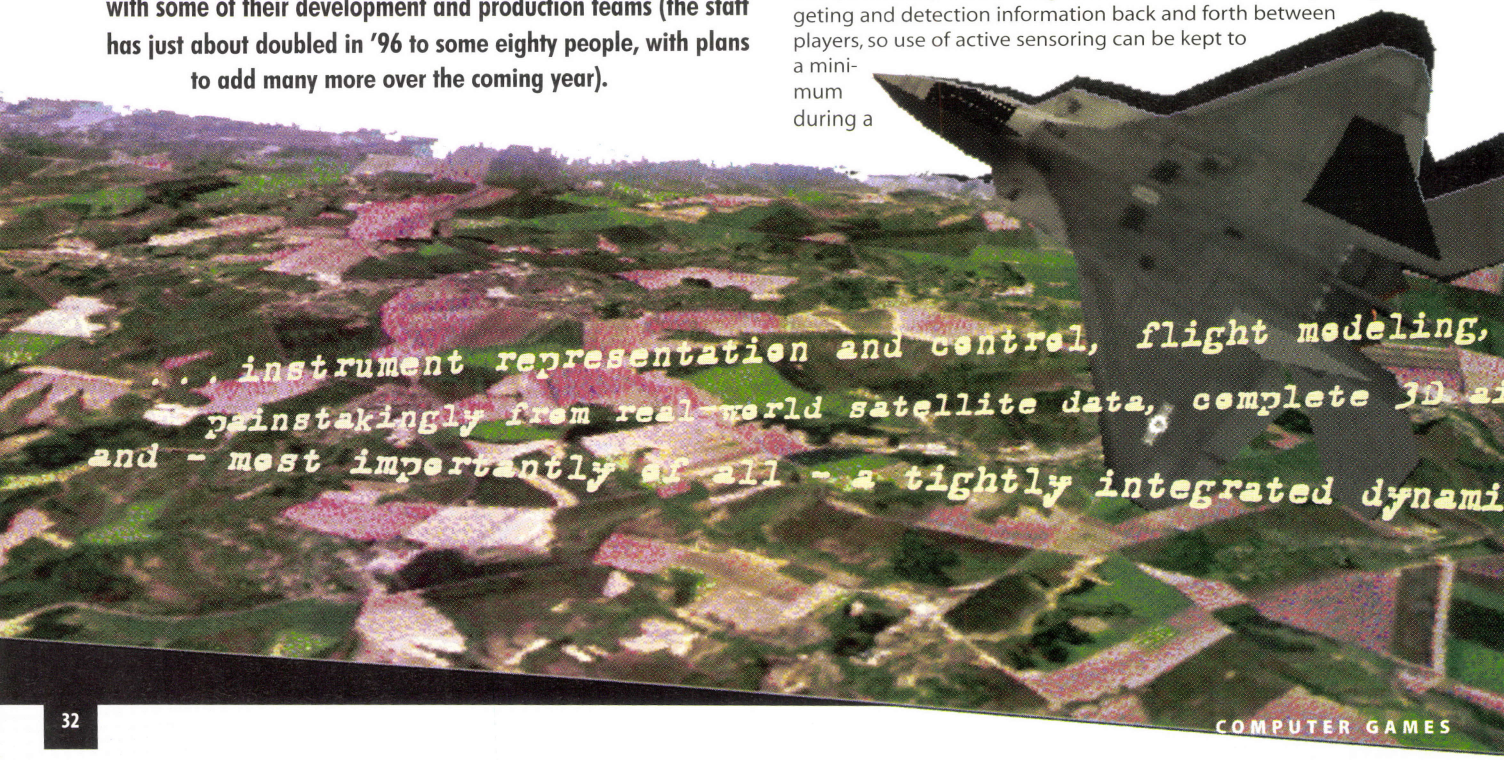
FIRST FLIGHT

I-Magic readies their first in-house simulation

I-Magic's next-generation F-22 simulation, *iF-22 ASF* (Air Superiority Fighter), is certainly the first – and may well prove to be the best – full-scale, comprehensive combat sim to be based on the upcoming real-world air superiority fighter. While enough has been included to make the software easy to get into even for casual players, the goal for this project – the first flight simulation designed in-house at I-Magic – has been to give enthusiasts cutting edge technology for simulation in all the areas it matters most: instrument representation and control, flight modeling (of course), realistic 3D terrain derived painstakingly from real-world satellite data, complete 3D air and ground target modeling, and – most importantly of all – a tightly integrated dynamic campaign and mission engine, designed to generate realistic missions for all the F-22's possible mission profiles.

Beyond fulfilling such core expectations, the simulation also offers comprehensive multi-player support, which means not only the necessary network and modem capability built in, but extensive communications features (available both in single- and multi-player modes) designed to make multi-player simulation an integrated, coordinated real-time experience, with full, realistic communication among allied players.

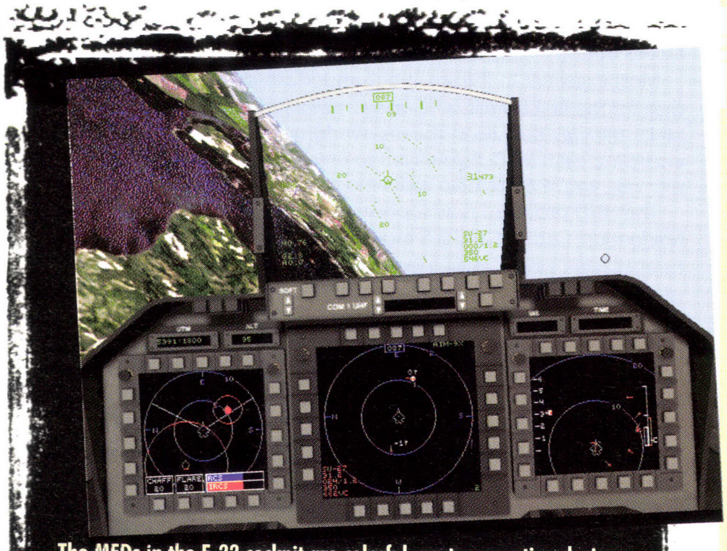
Let's talk about the communications first, since the plans here are a major first for the genre. For starters, four separate and distinct communications modes are provided – UHF, IFDL, Guard and Chat – each of which serves a distinct purpose during multi-player (as well as single-player against the computer) sessions. UHF provides options for direct communication on specific frequencies with other allied players. Both pre-scripted and custom (text) messages can be sent this way (only pre-scripted messages will be understood by the computer units, of course). IFDL (In-Flight Data Link) is a means of passing targeting and detection information back and forth between players, so use of active sensoring can be kept to a minimum during a


...instrument representation and control, flight modeling,
painstakingly from real-world satellite data, complete 3D ai
and - most importantly of all - a tightly integrated dynami

mission. Guard communications involves sending messages broadcast to all friendlies, and functions primarily for emergency purposes. Finally, the Chat mode is what it has traditionally been – a means for passing chat messages back and forth between players in-game.

Whether in single or multi-player mode, the advantages of having this sophisticated a communications system are legion. The "you against the world" tendency of most sims is now dissolved entirely (even in solo play), since your success or failure is dependent on your ability to stay coordinated with others on your team. The ability in multi-player to work with other units, to stay stay stealthy, to exchange target info both passively and actively is all enhanced with these systems.

Network play is built into the simulation from the ground up; while we were looking at an early pre-alpha, it was already clear that much of the network action had already been implemented. Players can rest assured that network multi-player is not something tacked on at the end in this project. Many of the features of the simulation, in fact, are tailored to the needs of multi-player. This raised the question of whether that means less time spent on the AI for solo player. Over a lunch of Chinese food (which co-producer Joe Rutledge apparently hates), it was suggested that to the contrary, if the dynamic campaign engine has to cope with the presence of a number of human players – and take over any player aircraft vacated suddenly (either accidentally or intentionally) – it has to be all the *more* versatile and "intelligent" to perform effectively during gameplay. Sounds right.



The MFDs in the F-22 cockpit are colorful, next-generation designs, which give the pilot dramatically improved situational awareness

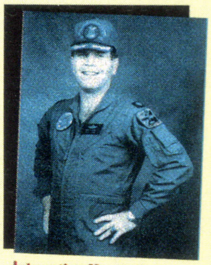
Another major component in the simulation is the work being done on the instrumentation for the MFDs (there are four in the F-22). The real F-22's instrumentation is significantly more automated

realistic 3D terrain derived
and ground target modeling,
c campaign and mission engine.

A VISIT WITH "WILD BILL" STEALEY

Riding herd on I-Magic is Chairman of the Board, "Wild Bill" Stealey. Best known as one of the original founders (and chairman and CEO) of MicroProse, Stealey has been in the industry since 1982. He took time during our visit to answer questions and to share with us his views on the direction of Interactive Magic and on a variety of computer gaming topics.

It is obvious that Wild Bill has varied and extensive plans to move I-Magic further into the on-line gaming market, while remaining focused on I-Magic's traditional areas of simulation and strategy gaming (or some merger of the two). For example, he says the company has been in discussion with several on-line developers, and that one has come up with a *Doom* engine. "...and I said, well okay, everybody plays *Doom*—big deal; *Doom* is just a death match. But give me *Doom* with *Air Warrior* characteristics and I'll play it. ... I want [it] to be infantry tactics.... Give me one that's got real objectives, sort of like *M-1 Tank Platoon*.... Let's make the death bad enough that we can send you back all the way to the beginning.... I want death to have a little more impact on you .... I wouldn't mind doing [a first-person *Doom*-like game] if you could really get the DSVD *and* the team platoon-level tactics.... I'm pretty excited about doing this, but I told them I don't want eight players; if it's not 150 I'm not interested."



Interactive Magic Chairman J.W. "Wild Bill" Stealey

CGS+: *What do you think of the idea of the "virtual battlefield" wherein a gamer, say, in a tank could call in air support and have it provided by a human pilot?*

Wild Bill: That's been my dream for some .. time, and the *Air Warrior* guys give me a little bit of that and I've been pushing my guys in [development], but one of the problems with that currently (but changing rapidly) is modern weapons systems, with all their guided missiles and all that kind of stuff... things happen faster and they'll need a *lot* more data passing back and forth between players [than in *Air Warrior*]... it takes wider bandwidth and faster updates to do [missiles, etc.] right.... And I think you will see that.

CGS+: *With a simulation, how do you know that you've got the necessary 80% of realism to give the players a feel for reality without completely burdening them down or overextending software and hardware requirements?*

Wild Bill: If *I* play it and feel good about it, we've got it... it's because I'm not a real hard-core gamer, I am a *fun* gamer.... I have to remind the guys in the back [in development] that this is a *sim*.... They think about the *hard* way of implementing it, ... and I say, "Okay, time out"; it's *magic*, all we have to do is get about 80% of it and it makes people feel they've got it.... I know in general what [an aircraft] feels like and in general how to respond to it.... On the other hand, in earlier combat sims planes felt like ...they all had an Atlas booster hooked to 'em... you'd point 'em up [and] they went zoom, straight up. We were guilty of that in the old days and a lot of people were; still are...

I felt in the old days sometimes you needed a Ph.D. in Fighter Pilot to play one of my games, so I believe we should have four levels: we should have what we call the "Bob" level [for those who just want to blow stuff up]... and then we've got the Lieutenant level... you don't get killed real quick, you go around and get some points... it's kind of fun, nothing tough, it may not be a real flight model.... then you've got the Major Bill level: Major Bill wants to show how cool he is, understands a little bit about flight dynamics, he wants of course to take *all* the weapons in the world... he doesn't want to be bothered with all that real stuff, just kind of, you know? He's the level where you can really get points, you can play for a long time, feel good about yourself... you don't have to know about drag co-efficients and all that kind of stuff. And then you've got the hard-core, techno-wee-

nie… level. But on easy level, you can't make it too easy, there's no way.

I'm trying to make my guys do the [hard-core] military end [in our games first] and move back…. On *iF-22 ASF* … we may fall a little bit on the side of being a little bit too techno-pure, and that'll be all right and it'll be my job as we get to the beta stage… [to add to playability].

CGS+: *Many recent sims have moved away from dynamic mission generation into scripted, preset missions which are the same each time you play them. Why do you think this is, and what is your approach to the issue?*

Wild Bill: What it is, is they've only done so much graphics, and they have to make sure you're in the place they want you to be graphically.… *We'll* get better at it.… I intend to run the war like…you remember *Red Storm Rising*? Where the FEBA [Forward Edge of Battle Area] went back and forth? I loved it, and I want to do that again where the FEBA goes back and forth based on your inputs to the mission [as well as] random factors… you can have the best mission in the world… and the rest of the world can go to hell in a hand basket and I don't care. Arnold [Hendrick] and the guys back there [in development] know that my issue is, I want to play real world, I want real world generation, I want real world disasters to happen, and I want my efforts to have some change probability–a little bit–one way or the other; but not absolute control, and let's see how we do…. I think that with *iF22 ASF* they've done a nice job of it… they've tried to do that a little bit with the tank game right now, and it's a demand that we get better and better, because I agree with you; I don't want weapons in the same place, I don't want bad guys in the same place, I don't want to learn squat about this [i.e., learn the fixed layouts].

When we asked Bill about the reign of graphics in the court of developer priorities and why that's been such a pervasive tendency in the industry, he said that it's because graphics sell, but that in the end, no one can run the games in their highest graphics modes: "We've been going through this transition period for ten years where we can always write better software than the hardware can run. I don't think that will ever end, and it will continue to be a battle of how much we take care of what we know is going to be out there in twelve months when this game actually ships…." The motto at Interactive Magic is, "…we make good games first, we make graphics second."

CGS+: *What do you think about the merging of strategy and simulation, or of strategy aspects within simulation games?*

Wild Bill: I tell the guys that we want to do sims and also do strategy games. I don't want to just go out there and blast everything and blow it up; I like doing that and it's easiest to show the reviewers…., but I really think you've got the exact right combination: it's got to be something that gives me a little bit of action and a whole lot of strategy. ■

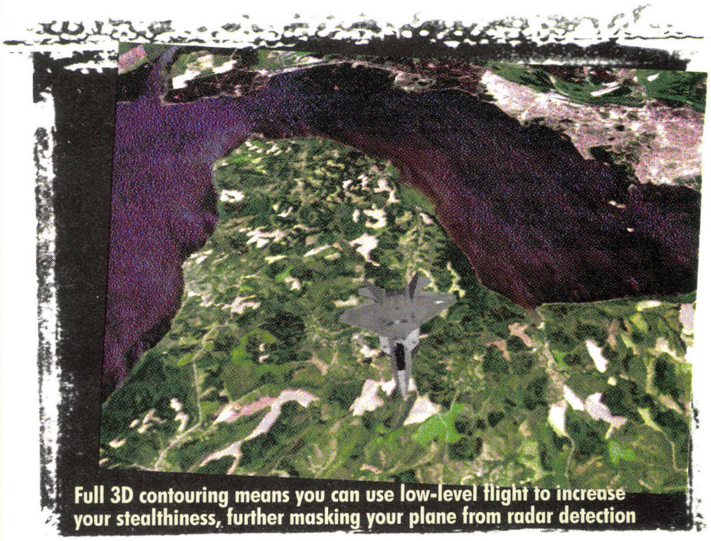
than it has been in previous aircraft, and while this is reflected in the simulation, it doesn't mean the kind of over-simplification we've seen so far in attempts to model this aircraft. The radar, for instance, provides automatic control over range and azimuth so the pilot doesn't have to fiddle to get the optimal radar cone for stealthy detection of opponents, but the simulation also provides fine filtering control over the *types* of targets detected, a major improvement for situational awareness during combat. No less than *twelve* pre-defined MFD modes are implemented in-software (four each for Combat, Status and Navigation), and four more user-defined modes can be created and then called up quickly during flight. This may sound complicated, but in fact the ability to switch quickly between pre-defined modes means management of what you see on the four MFDs can be customized to your immediate in-flight situation, without excessive fiddling.

The simulation makes excellent use of the fact that the real F-22 will come with full-color MFDs; targets (friendly and opponent) are color-coded for quick comprehension, and friendly/enemy aircraft speed and direction are designated efficiently as well. You create your own current target and shoot list, and the radar modes give you a quick bird's-eye-view of your priorities; but, more importantly, you even have visual access to your wingman's shoot-list as well, again, giving this simulation a serious edge in the area of coordinated team tactics during a mission.

Most excellent in the small-but-important-detail arena is the fact that, for the first time in a PC-based simulation, you can control your MFDs the way they do in the real world, using the array of buttons encircling each MFD. If you *want* to fine-tune each of your displays this way, you're more than welcome to it.

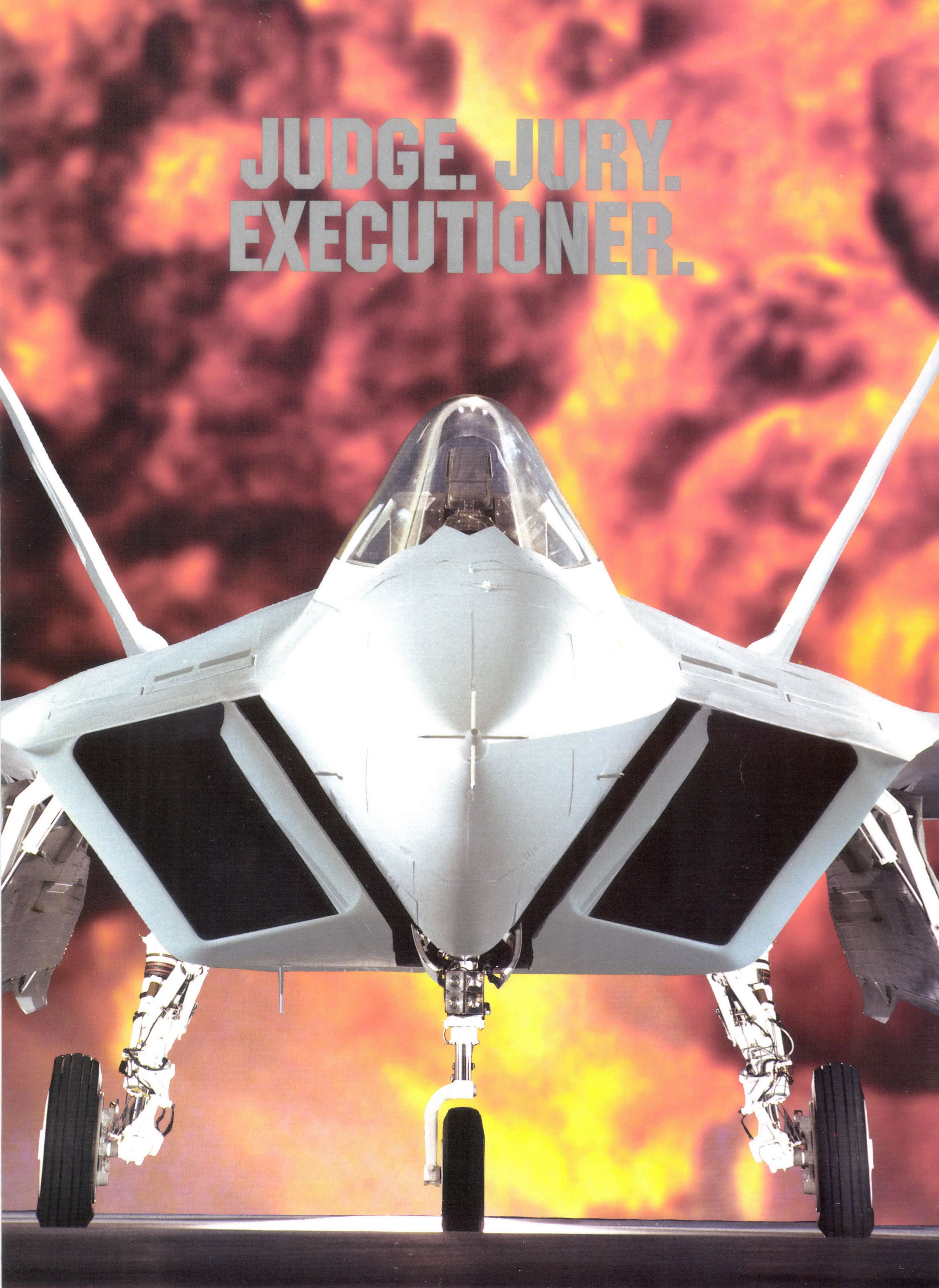
The HUD provided is as sophisticated as they come, with Navigation, Combat and ILS modes, each replete with all the features players would expect in a sophisticated, 21st-century air superiority fighter.

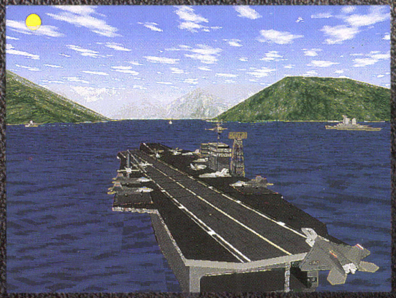
In Navigation mode, one neat feature is that time to waypoint as well as the difference between actual and scheduled time to target is displayed, giving this sim the kind of precision mission execution also possible with the company's *Apache* and *Hind* simulations. In Combat mode, the HUD gives you an azimuth steering cue for ground attacks, something surprisingly missing from some recent simulations. Finally, in ILS mode, the usual glide path indicators are supplemented with information giving you optimal altitude and vertical velocity for any point along the glide path, which should make landing the F-22 as much fun as every other part of a mission.



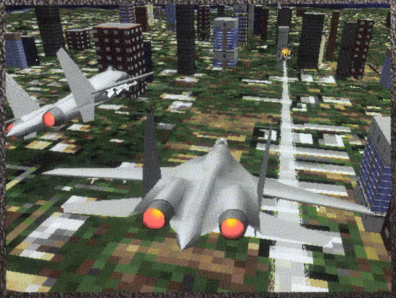
Full 3D contouring means you can use low-level flight to increase your stealthiness, further masking your plane from radar detection

While the F-22 does *not* have a built-in laser designator, either for the HUD or MFDs, it can still use laser-controlled munitions – someone *else* has to be doing the lasing. Laser weapons are provided, and a simple system is in place for the player to use communications to designate targets for

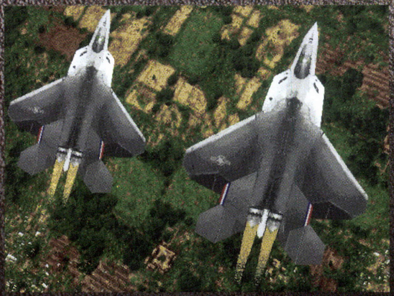

JUDGE. JURY.
EXECUTIONER.

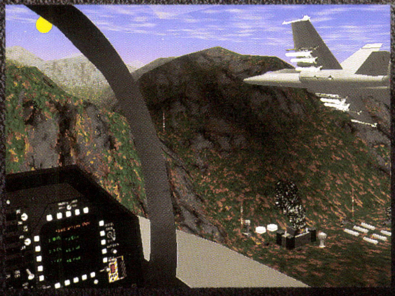


Had enough of passive foreign policies and economic sanctions?



Good, because we have an alternate solution. Try sending a 33-ton **killing machine** with laser-guided missiles to buzz into their living rooms at **1300mph** and personally blow them to kingdom come.





Now that's politics.

"...the holy grail of military flight simulation."
- Computer Player

"...that magical balance of realism and playability."
- PC Gamer

"Impressive, breathtaking."
- Computer Gaming World

Over 3.5 million square miles of real-world terrain, more than double any other combat simulator

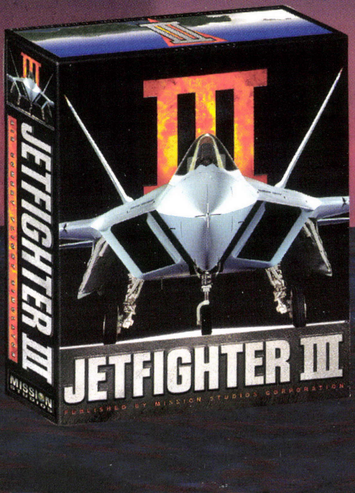
Fly over 90 death-defying missions in 21st century F-22N Lightning II and the F/A-18 Hornet

Hi-tech arsenal includes Sidewinders, AMRAAMs, Mk82 bombs, and laser-guided Maverick missiles

Unlimited views: virtual cockpit featuring full 360° of 3D viewing, missile-cam, tactical view, and programmable camera angles

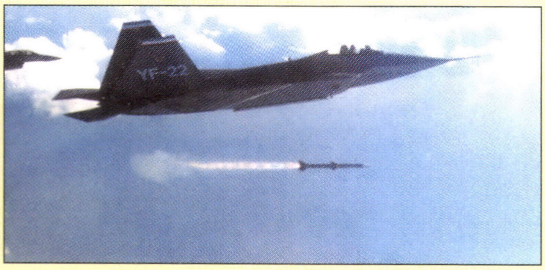
Stunning 3D terrain generated from U.S. Dept. of Defense, FAA, USGS, NOAA and the Defense Mapping Agency--it's all there in the real world!

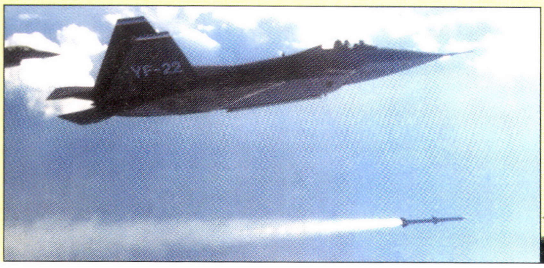
Additional features include terrifying carrier landings, dramatic special effects, digitized voices and sound effects, and the most realistic performance engine ever created



JETFIGHTER III. THE BEST JUST GOT BETTER.

www.missionstudios.com MISSION STUDIOS





F-22 TECHNICAL INFO

Engineering and Manufacturing Development Cost (est.): $11 billion

Initial production (scheduled): late 1998

Mission: air dominance fighter with air-surface capability

Developed by: Boeing & Lockheed Martin

Features: First look/first kill capability – improved sensors, weapons to give pilot ability to detect, target and fire all prior to being detected

Reduced observables, supercruise – combines stealth with speed (no need for afterburner)

Air-Surface – carries up to two 1,000lb. Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs); precision ground attack without use of radar

Engines: Two Pratt & Whitney F119-PW-100s, featuring two-dimensional thrust vectoring, high thrust-weight ratio, integrated flight propulsion controls

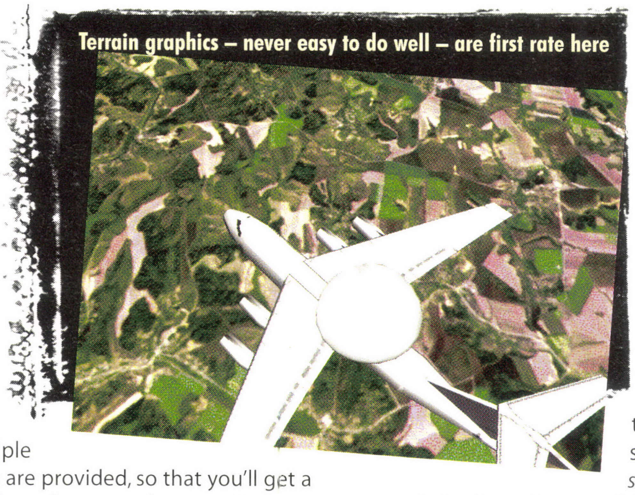
Fuselage: 19 feet long, 12 feet wide

Wings: 16 feet (side of body), 18 feet (leading edge)

attack and either have them lased or hand them off.

The internal and external views systems will be extensive; the player will be able to shift 45 degrees at a time around the cockpit, as well as snap to one of five specific views if needed. Padlocking of the opponent can be turned on or off, and all of the external views can be zoomed or rotated.

The campaign and mission areas for *iF-22 ASF* total about 250,000 square miles, approximately 80,000 square miles for each of the three theatres (Persian Gulf, Bosnia and Ukraine; "one a past hot spot, one a present hot spot, and one a future hot spot," as Joe Rutledge put it). The 3D data for these theatres has been pulled in off of official satellite photography and painstakingly re-created by hand, so that if there's a building, city, road or wheat field in that part of the world in reality, you'll find it in the simulation. Multiple levels of terrain graphics resolution are provided, so that you'll get a real sense of appropriate distance from the ground as you climb or dive (the in-process graphics so far look most photo-realistic from approximately 20,000 feet altitude; most sims optimize terrain appearance for a particular altitude and look more or less detailed above and below that altitude. The team felt this is the right middle point for the F-22's flight and mission profile). Haze, horizon gradient, clouds, and fog will all be included as well.



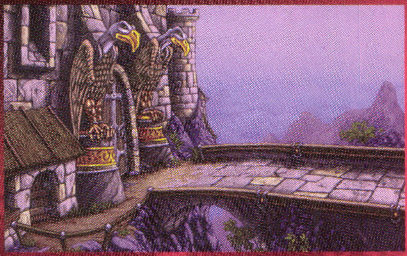
Terrain graphics – never easy to do well – are first rate here

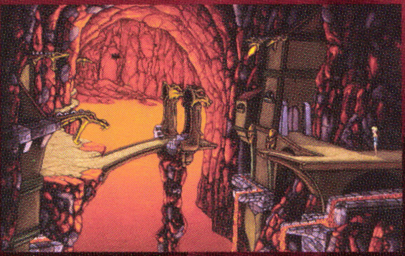
The theatres have been chosen for terrain variety, but also to give the player distinctly different combat situations to work with. Different generations of weapons technology will be present in each theatre, and different levels of air and ground military capacity, providing a wide variety of challenge and practice for both novice and experienced players.

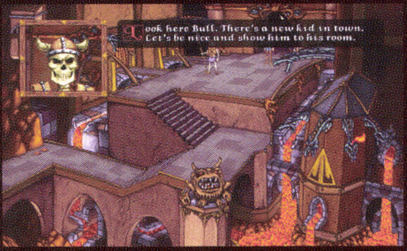
Now to the dynamic campaign engine. As we've commented on before, this is an area of great challenge for simulation designers; I-Magic is taking it head-on. Both single missions and campaigns will be generated dynamically, which means you'll never have the same situation twice. Lots of attention is being paid to the AI here, so that both air and ground allies and opponents will function plausibly, and so that the player's own role in the overall campaign will be scaled properly. Most interestingly, while the player's individual successes or failures will have a general effect on the progress of the complete campaign, how exactly the player's actions will affect the FEBA in campaign mode won't always be directly calculable. There may be occasions where a player flies a completely successful mission at one area of the front, while the campaign engine generates a breakdown at a different area. The front lines of the campaign will thus prove dynamic along with the placement of friendly and enemy forces; it won't simply be a matter of pushing the FEBA back or having it pushed back.

In single mission mode, the player will ultimately be able to select the type of mission s/he'd like to fly, but it will be up to the engine to generate the actual missions. Currently, the mission generator is planned to generate a *set* of missions at a time, so you'll have some choice from that set of the mission type you'd like to fly. Generated missions can apparently be saved for future use as custom missions, either in single or multi-player mode, so that if you like what was generated, you can re-use it later on. All conditions for the mission – time of day, weather, location, forces available and opposed, level of intelligence – are dynamic, so you'll have to study mission briefings carefully to understand exactly what you'll be dealing with. The designers are using the metaphor of the PDA (Personal Data Assistant) to construct this part of the interface, and it proves simple, plausible and intuitive.

All told, there's not a single area in air combat design this project has left out; the design team is extensive, and has professional experience with everything from cutting-edge 3D graphics design to real-world military simulation. We feel confident that when all the pieces come together, *iF-22 ASF* will prove to be one of *the* major simulations of 1997. Given the expected competition, that's no mean feat. *–S.W.*







Look here Bull. There's a new kid in town.
Let's be nice and show him to his room.

The Adventure game that challenges your moral fibre

- 48 fully animated characters
- 60 stunning, high resolution locations
- 4 massive, non linear, inter-linked worlds
- Animated by an ex-Disney artist

"A journey of a lifetime awaits you in this marvelous adventure. The world of Fable combines stunning animations with progressive puzzles, curious characters and outlandish events, all topped off with a twisted sense of humor."

"A game to rival the Lucas Art's Adventures."
LEE BROWN, CD-ROM MAGAZINE

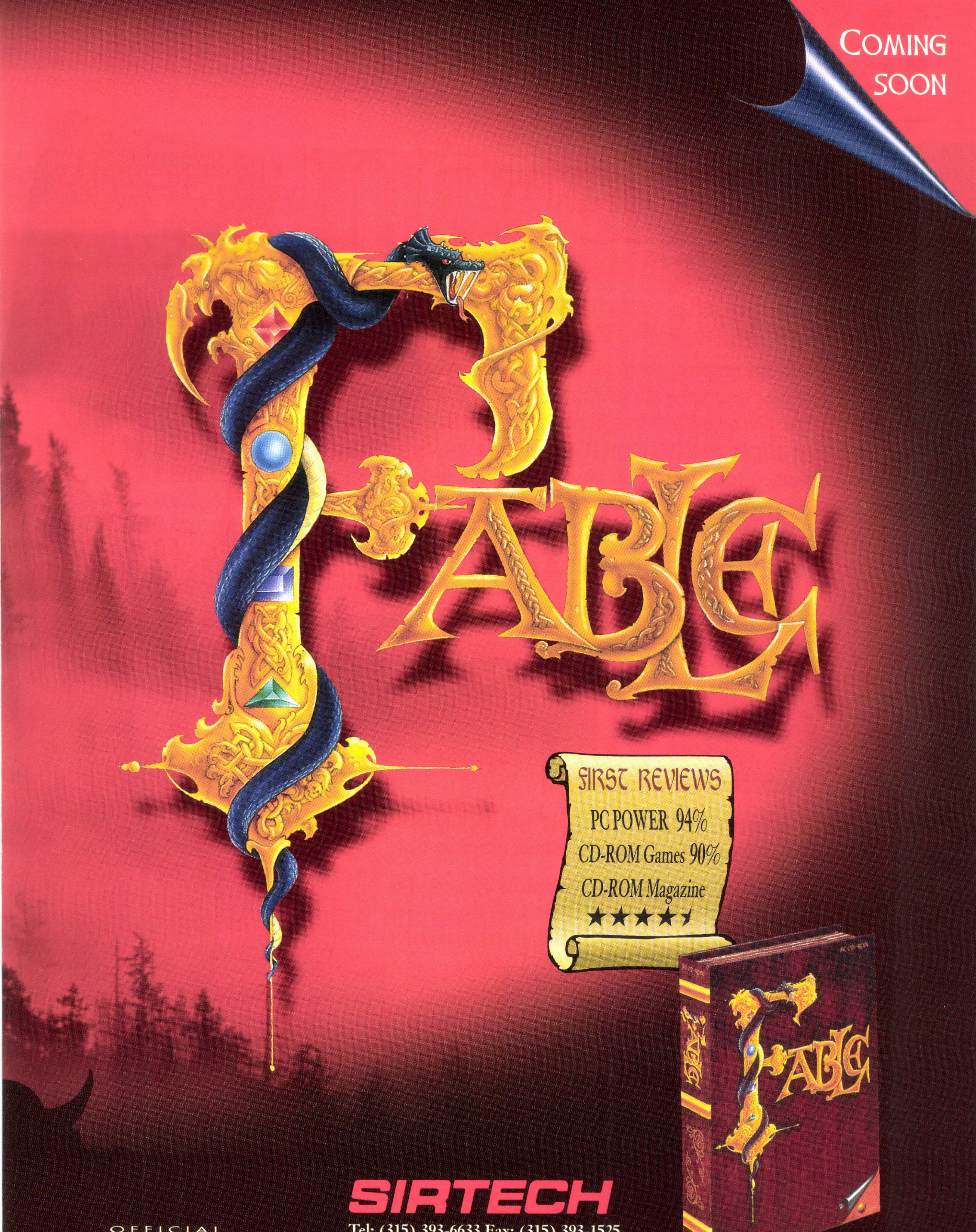
"Reminiscent of the King's Quest series."
MARK ULYATT, PC POWER PLAY

For Windows 95 and DOS

To order, visit your retailer,
or call: (800) 447-1230.

Developed by:
TELSTAR
Electronic Studios

©Copyright Telstar Electronic Studios Ltd.


COMING SOON
FABLE
PC CD-ROM
FABLE

FIRST REVIEWS
PC POWER 94%
CD-ROM Games 90%
CD-ROM Magazine
★★★★½

SIRTECH
Tel: (315) 393-6633 Fax: (315) 393-1525
E-mail: webmaster@sir-tech.com
www.sir-tech.com

OFFICIAL SPONSOR
USA
BOBSLED

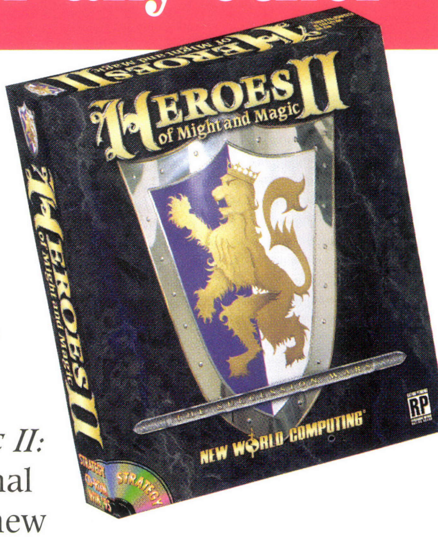
CG RATED

Computer Gaming World

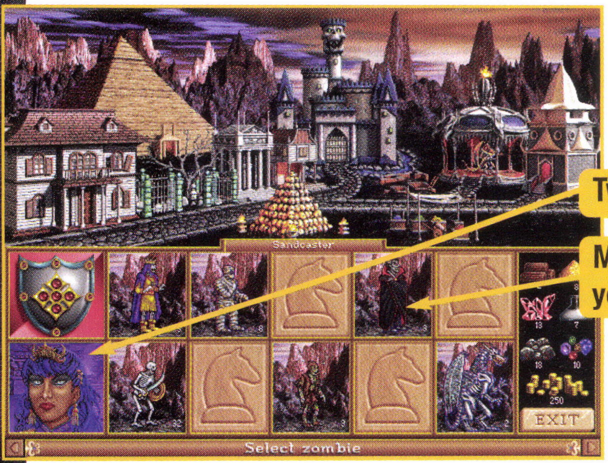
“Heroes of Might and Magic™ II is games of this year–or any other

HEROES II of Might and Magic™

THE SUCCESSION WARS

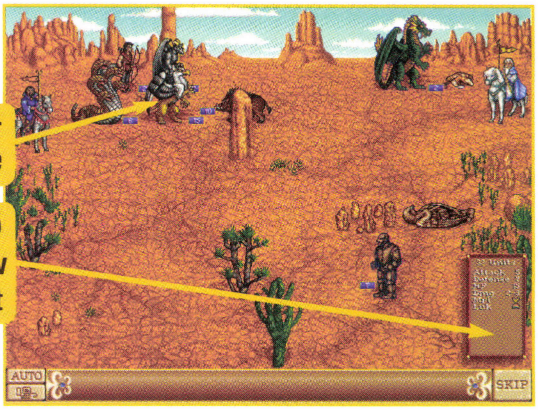


Build an empire, overrun a continent, crush your opponents, and take the throne. *Heroes of Might and Magic II: The Succession Wars* picks up where the popular original *Heroes of Might and Magic* left off. Except now you have all new and enhanced tools to assist you in your quest to expand your empire and assert dominion over the land. ***Heroes of Might and Magic II:*** **It's time to learn how to be a hero...all over again.**



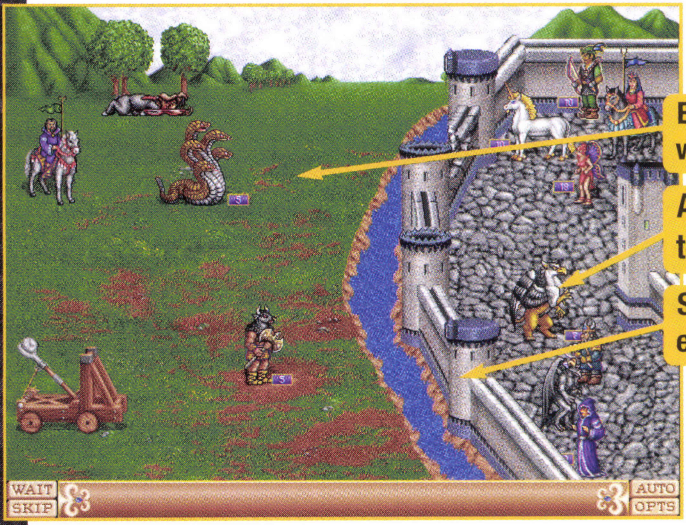
Two new Hero types, Necromancer (shown) and Wizard

Monsters are now upgradeable—make your Vampire into a Vampire Lord, etc.



Strategic combat is enhanced by dozens of new spell types—*Hypnotize, Berserk, Holy Shout, Mass Curse,* and tons more

Innovative combat options include dynamic info bar for comparing troop stats on the fly and view grid function enabling pinpoint unit movement



Expanded “interactive” battlefields with enlarged combat maps

All new and improved artwork for creatures, terrain, backgrounds—everything!

Strengthen castle defense by erecting turrets and building moats

NEW WORLD COMPUTING®

STUDIO 3DO

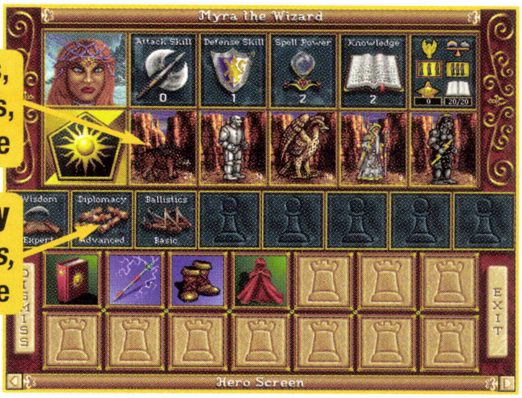
clearly one of the best strategy
year, for that matter." — PC Gamer

Computer Player

Coming Soon!

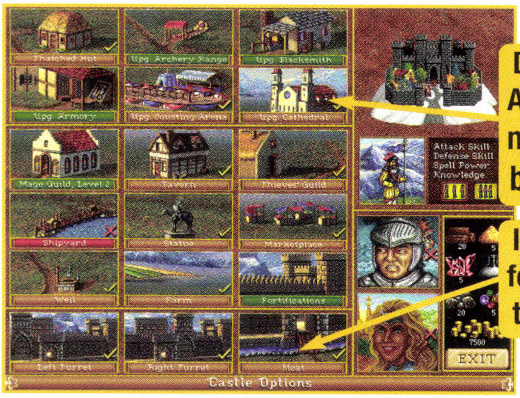
Heroes of Might And Magic™ II, *The Expansion Pack*

- 4 New Campaigns Containing 24 Scenarios
- Over 20 Stand-Alone Scenarios
- New Map Items And Artifacts


Myra the Wizard
Attack Skill
Defense Skill
Spell Power
Knowledge
0
1
2
2
Wisdom
Expert
Diplomacy
Advanced
Ballistics
Basic
DISMISS
EXIT
Hero Screen

Wizard's monsters include Boars, Steel Golems, Rocs, Archmages, Titans, and more

New character component, **Secondary Skills,** includes *Wisdom, Ballistics, Diplomacy, Archery,* and more

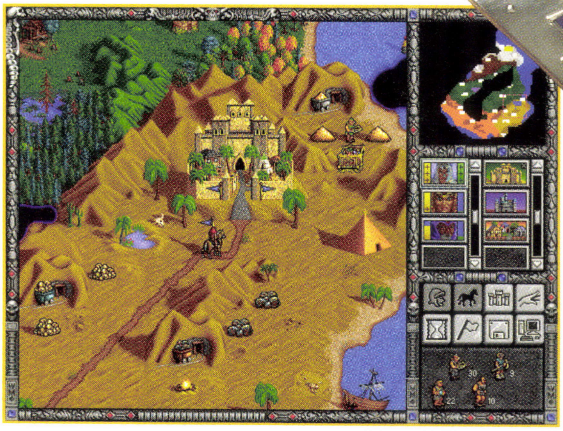

Thatched Hut
Upg. Archery Range
Upg. Blacksmith
Upg. Armory
Upg. Jousting Arena
Upg. Cathedral
Mage Guild, Level 2
Tavern
Thieves' Guild
Shipyard
Statue
Marketplace
Well
Farm
Fortifications
Left Turret
Right Turret
Moat
Attack Skill
Defense Skill
Spell Power
Knowledge
7500
EXIT
Castle Options

Dwellings, such as Cathedrals, Armories, Mage Guilds etc. are now upgradeable and produce better troops

Increased options for fortification building and troop recruitment

Improved Interface Provides Stunning Visuals and Enhanced Navigation

- "World Builder" utility allows you to create your own lands
- Split campaigns let you choose whether to play on the side of good or evil
- Multiplayer action—up to six players via internet, modem, or network
- 65 heroes and 66 monster types to choose from



For more information call:

1-800-985-7456

(outside the U.S. call: (415) 261-3227)

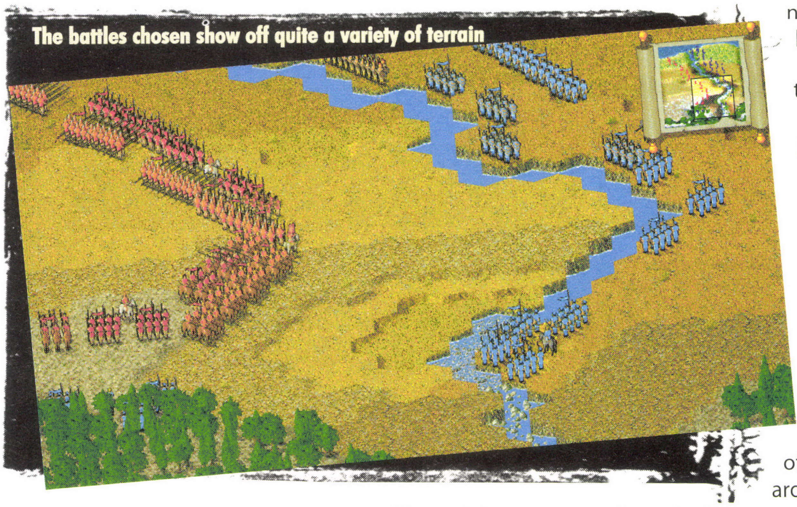
http://www.nwcomputing.com

New World Computing, Studio 3DO, the New World Computing and 3DO logos, and Heroes of Might and Magic are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of the 3DO Company. ©1996 The 3DO Company. All rights reserved. All other trademarks belong to their respective holders. New World Computing is a division of The 3DO Company.

THE GREAT BATTLES OF ALEXANDER

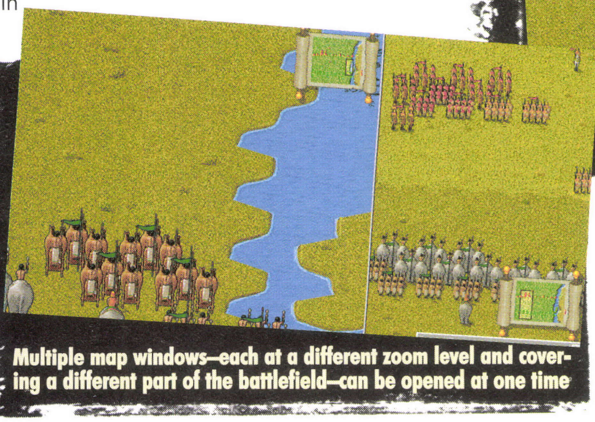
One last preview of this game of ancient warfare

The Great Battles of Alexander, the computer version of GMT Games' board wargame, has had a bit of a tortured history. Over two years ago Erudite Software started development on the computerized version, little realizing the path the game would take. While originally intended for independent publication, Erudite eventually signed on with SSI but, for reasons unannounced, it was eventually dropped from SSI's production roster. Finally, though, it's found a home with Interactive Magic. While we revisited the game briefly last month, our trip down to I-Magic gave us the chance to talk with some of the folks intimately involved in the production of this ancients wargame: Paul Potera, Producer-External Development for I-Magic; Brian Tate (Project Manager on *Fallen Haven* but also involved with *Alexander*); and Craig Taylor, Game Designer. They brought us up to speed on the features of this fascinating looking title, which is (finally!) due to ship in early '97.


The battles chosen show off quite a variety of terrain

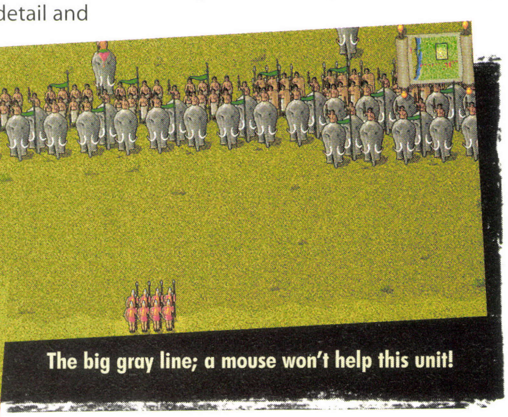
Alexander traces the military career of the most famous of Macedonian generals, starting with the battle of Chaeronea (Greece)–where a teen-age Alexander fought alongside his nearly-as-famous father, Philip II–on through nine other battles, culminating in the battle of Hydaspes (India), where Alexander encountered "the powerful *rajah* Porus and his elephant corps."

While a turn-based game, *Alexander* doesn't follow the typical "I move/fight everything, you move/fight everything" formula. Instead, as Craig explains, "...what you have is... a number of units attached to each general [and] a number of generals on each side, and the sequence changes every turn.... You'll have a different general come up: you might have two Macedonian generals in a row and then one enemy general or you might have two or three of the enemy generals in a row... it might go back and forth. You never know the exact order things are going to happen in the game." In multiplayer games the players can each take command of a single general and his troops or control more than one general. When playing solitaire at the highest level of gameplay, you will only play the role of a single commander (Alexander or his equivalent enemy); before the battle you'll be able to issue orders like "defend for five turns and then attack, or attack immediately..." to your sub-commanders, but once the battle is joined you will only command the troops under you while the AI controls the other generals and their units.


Multiple map windows—each at a different zoom level and covering a different part of the battlefield—can be opened at one time

For anyone who saw the Design Notes *CGS+* ran on the game over two years ago, the obvious question is "What's changed? What's been added in two years?" When we posed this question to the I-Magic *Alexander* team, Craig responded: "We've got a lot more animation... we've got in the sound effects... a lot of new features in there. One thing you can do now [is that] if a unit is [about to] take it in the flank there's a check–and the better the unit the higher the chances of [passing] the check–that it will turn to face you as opposed to taking it in the flank." Obviously, graphics and sound are an important part of the game; says Craig: "I like to tell people that... most games of [this] sort that you see now look like they pasted a few figures to the top of a counter and it moves around, whereas ours looks like a miniature game where the little guys march up and bash each other over the head."

With all of this talk of graphics and animation, hard-core wargamers may be fearing another one of those poor miniatures adaptations we've seen in the past; such fears, however, look to be groundless as Erudite and I-Magic are working to ensure plenty of historical detail and accuracy lies behind the pretty face. Unit types like hypaspists, peltasts, cardaces, slingers, and even elephants are only a handful of those that are in the game. Zones of control, missile attacks, leadership initiative ratings, and even elephants gone amok are all included (they've even remembered the detail of horses being *very* adverse to the presence of elephants). Battles are designed for generally speedy play; no 50 hour marathons (pun intended). Even with all the animation turned on, the longest battle should take no more than three hours; welcome news for those who'll be playing the game multi-player.


The big gray line; a mouse won't help this unit!

As a high-school history book only scratches the surface of ancient history, this preview has only discussed the most basic of features in the game. Computer wargamers of all types–beginning to advanced–hungry for something from this classic period of military history should get quite a feast with *The Great Battles of Alexander*. –S.U.

"A complex, intricate space strategy game with an easy-to-use interface and fantastic tutorial!"-PC Gamer

"Intelligent on-line tutorial...user friendly interface" - Computer Game Review

'This is certainly a great game, it should be judged against the classics such as Doom! and Sim City"-Chris Henrikson, Canada

"...the gameplay is frustratingly addictive"- Computer Player

"Some companies thrive on meaningless games with flash and fluff. It's refreshing to run into a great game system-thanks!" -Robert Gates, USA

"...an incredible game!"- Rafael Portela Moreira, Brazil

"Stars is an excellent game!"- Strategy Plus

"..it is the most playable game I've ever played and that includes my favorites Doom! Duke Nukem' and Command and Conquer".- Randy Mehling, Kansas City, USA

The game is the best game I have ever played. The highest replay value of any strategy game on the market. The AI is amazing."- Les Hutchins, USA

Full Motion Video Free Zone

NO

NO 'INTERACTIVE CHARACTERS' THAT YOU CAN'T INTERACT WITH.
NO 'AMAZING ANIMATIONS' TO BORE YOU TO TEARS AFTER 3 REPLAYS.
NO TIRED OLD ACTORS WHO CAN'T GET REAL JOBS.
NO WEAK AND WORTHLESS GAMEPLAY.
NO PAINFULLY REPETITIVE SOUNDTRACK.
NO WAY TO STOP PLAYING THIS GAME.

"Just a great game!"

Stars!

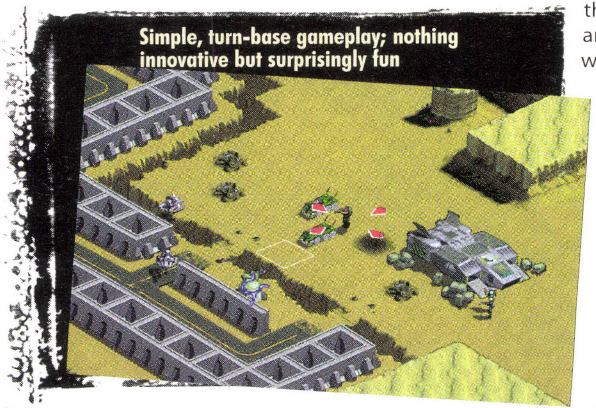
empire® INTERACTIVE

TEL: (301) 916 9302 WEB SITE http://www.empire-us.com

FALLEN HAVEN

A war-torn colony world faces alien assault

A turn-based game of combat on a distant colonial planet, *Fallen Haven* is a bit of a surprise to the gaming world (and to I-Magic as well). Developed by MICOMEQ of Canada, this almost-completed game was recently signed by I-Magic, with plans for release early in '97. The back story has a colonial planet on the brink of general war suddenly set upon by an alien force out for blood. You take control of either the rogue human province of Haven or the alien Taurans, battling your way across the hostile "neutral" human provinces to clash with your primary rival.


Simple, turn-base gameplay; nothing innovative but surprisingly fun

At a strategic level, you will need to coordinate money, material, and energy production; focus your scientific efforts into different areas of research; set unit production; and build up your provincial cities with a mind for both defense and mining. You are also able to freely place your units–with no concern for time or movement points–for defensive purposes, or to load them into drop ships and send them off to invade neighboring territories. A strategic level map gives you an overview of the world of New Haven. Says I-Magic's Paul Potera, "as you move into each province there are certain things you have to overcome." Radar/scanners will help you peek into other lands to determine their tech levels and examine their defenses; planning your invasion forces to match what a province holds is critical to success. "There are also certain special missions. On any of the given colony maps there are a number of missions where you have objectives other than just to destroy the entire enemy… you might have to capture a particular unit or building, and you get some special reward… you might get money, you might get research points, [or] a new type of unit."

The tactical mode is rather reminiscent of *X-Com*, with unit mixes akin to those in *Command & Conquer*. You move your various troops and vehicles against the enemy forces and buildings, watching out for such nasty things as defensive laser towers. Every unit is given a set amount of action points per turn that can be expended on movement and the firing of light and heavy weapons; action points left over at the end of a turn can be used for defensive fire during the enemy's phase. A wise commander builds his or her cities with defenses in mind, keeping any potential landing zones far away from critical (and fragile) facilities; of course, a wise *offensive* commander will try to open doors for his or her drop ships through the judicious use of tactical nuclear missiles.

Fallen Haven is a single player game (a possible sequel would add multi-player capabilities) with two campaigns playable from either side: the easier campaign gives each side a single province at opposite sides of the map, with neutral but fully armed human provinces in-between; the tougher campaign starts the gamer out with just one province, facing an enemy force in possession of the rest of the continent (no, it's not as hard as it sounds; that enemy was much weakened by its march across the planet, so the early going won't be too

VIDEO GAMES

Shop our Online Catalog! www.cdmag.com/chips.html

Call NOW to Order
Source 10841
802-767-3033

CHIPS & BITS INC
Int'l 802-767-3033 Fax 802-767-3382
POB 234 Dept 10841 Rochester VT 05767
Orders/Questions: cbisales@sover.net
Customer Service: cbiserv@sover.net

'ULTIMATE MORTAL KOMBAT 3' Shao Kahn has entered the earth realm to punish humans and wrench their souls. GEN $66 SAT $54 SNES $69

'SOVIET STRIKE' from the creatures of the Desert Strike Trilogy. Anyone can build a concrete and steel building. But it takes a darn good soldier to bring one down. You can customize your own Apache assault chopper, hellfire missiles and chain guns for an outfit that's not suppose to exist. PSX $49

'SONIC X-TREME' Move in any direction with full camera rotation. That Evil genius, Robotnik has created a Death Egg so huge that its gravitational pull is sucking up all five surrounding worlds. Sonic's job is to rescue the Mips before they're destroyed. SAT $46

'CRUIS'N USA' Choose from several vehicles in this wild 14 stage ride across American highways. Split screen perspective allows players to share the action simultaneously. NIN 64 $62

NINTENDO 64	
Blade & Barrel	$69
Blast Corps	$64
Body Harvest	$62
Creator	$69
Cruis'n USA	**$62**
Donkey Kong Fantasy	$64
Doom	$72
FIFA Intl Soccer 64	**$69**
Golden Eye 007	**$64**
Ken Griffey Jr Basebl	**$66**
Killer Instinct Gld	**$72**
Kirby Bowl	$62
Legend of Zelda	**$69**
Mad Catz Anal Steer	$52
Mad Catz Basic Cntrlr	$25
Md Ctz Flght/Fght Ctr	$40
Mega Man	$64
Monster Dunk Bball	$66
MK Kombat Trilogy	**$75**
N64 Arcade Shark	$42
N64 Controller ea.	$29
N64 Extension Cable	$10
N64 Flight Force Pro	$52

NINTENDO 64	
N64 Gameshark	$59
N64 Memory Card Plus	$26
N64 RFU Adapter	$19
N64 Shark Pad Pro	$29
NBA Hang Time	$76
Nintendo 64 Sys.	**$249**
Pilot Wings 64	$62
Robotech Crystal Drms	$69
Robotron X	$69
Silicon Valley	$69
Stacker	$66
Star Fox 64	$69
Star Wars Shd Emp	**$72**
Street Fighter	$64
Super Mario 64	**$62**
Super Mario Kart R	**$69**
Top Gear Rally	$72
Top Gun	$66
Turok Dinosr Hntr	$69
Ultra Descent	$66
War Gods	$69
Wave Race	$62
Wayne Gretz Hockey	$76

GENESIS	
FIFA Soccer '97 Gld Ed	$56
Lunar 2	$49
Madden FB '97	**$54**
Mortal Kombat 3	$64
NBA Live 97	**$56**
NHL Hockey '97	$56
Sonic Blast	**$51**
Ultimate Mort Komb 3	$69
Vectorman 2	**$52**
Virtua Fighter Animatn	$52

PLAYSTATION	
ASCII Fighter Stick	$44
Allied General	$50
Andretti Racing '97	$49
Beyond the Beyond	$50
Breath of Fire 3	**$56**
Chronicles of Sword	$50
Command & Conqr	**$52**
Contra:Legacy of War	$46
Crash Bandicoot	**$52**
Crusader:No Remorse	$49

PLAYSTATION	
Dark Forces	**$49**
Descent 2	$52
Destruction Drby 2	**$52**
Die Hard Trilogy	$50
Duke Nukem 3D	$52
FIFA Soccer '97	**$49**
Final Doom	$52
Final Fantasy 4	**$69**
Final Fantasy VII	**$72**
Formula 1 Wrld Ch	**$52**
Hexen	$52
Hyperblade	$51
Into the Shadows	$52
Kings Field 2	$51
Legacy of Kain	**$52**
Mad Catz Anl Str Whl	$54
Madden Football 97	$54
Magic the Gathering	$50
Mechwarrior 2	$49
Myst	$50
NAMCO Musm 1-5 ea.	$44
NASCAR Racing	**$46**
NBA In The Zone 2	$46

PLAYSTATION	
NBA Live 97	**$49**
NFL Game Day 97	**$50**
NFL QB Club '97	$39
NHL Hockey 97	**$50**
PSX Flight Force Pro	$56
PSX Memory Card Plus	$40
PSX Mouse w/Pad	$32
Panzer General	$54
Perfect Weapon	$54
Power Slave	$46
Quake	**$54**
Rebel Assault 2	$49
Resident Evil 2	$54
Ridge Racer Revolutn	$44
Samurai Showdown 3	$50
SimCity 2000	$44
Sony Playst w/Game	$249
Sony Playstation Sys	$219
Soviet Strike	**$49**
Space Jam	$42
Star Trek Generations	$52
Tecmo Super Bowl	$54
Tekken 2	**$44**

PLAYSTATION	
Toh Shin Den 2	$46
Tomb Raider	**$50**
Triple Play 97	$52
Twisted Metal 2	**$50**
Warhammer Horn Rat	$50
Wing Commander 4	$52
Wipeout 2	**$50**

SATURN	
Command & Conquer	$52
Crusader:No Remorse	$49
Daytona USA: Chp	**$44**
Doom	$52
Dragon Force	**$48**
Duke Nukem 3D	**$52**
FIFA Soccer '97	$49
Fighting Vipers	**$44**
Hexen	$52
Lunar Directors Cut	$54
Madden Football '97	$54
Mechwarrior 2	$49
NFL '97	**$54**

SATURN	
NFL QB Club '97	$52
NHL Hockey '97	$50
Nights w/3D Pad	**$62**
Panzer General	$54
Quake	**$54**
Rally	$52
RayMan 2	$54
Re-Loaded	$52
Sacred Pools	$52
Saturn Arcade Racer	$64
Saturn Core System	$209
Saturn Net Link	**$199**
SimCity 2000	$49
Sonic 3D Blast	$43
Soviet Strike	**$49**
Street Fighter Alpha 2	$52
Toh Shin Den URA	**$44**
Tomb Raiders	**$50**
Ultimate Mort Komb 3	$54
Virtua Cop 2 w/gun	**$68**
Virtua Fighter 3	**$54**
Virtua Fighters 2	**$54**
X-Men Childrn of Atom	$49

SNES	
Breath of Fire 2	$62
ChronoTrigger	**$72**
Donkey Kong C 3	**$64**
Doom	$56
FIFA Soccer '97 Gld Ed	$56
Madden FB '97	$56
Marvel Suer Heroes	$54
Mortal Kombat 3	**$67**
NBA Live 97	$56
NHL '97	$59
Secret of Evermore	$64
Secret of Mana	**$59**
Street Fighter Alpha 2	$66
Ultimate MK 3	**$71**
Zelda 3	$34
Zoop	$36

We Also Carry
NEO GEO
Game Gear
CDi

Visa, MC and Discover accepted. Checks held 4 weeks. MONEY ORDERS UNDER $200 SAME AS CASH. COD $8. Price, availability, offer subject to change at any time. Hardware orders may require additional shipping and handling charges. Defectives replaced with same product. All sales final. Call for details.

Shipping and handling charges calculated on a per order, per shipment, and per item basis. The "per order" charge is charged once per order placed and the "per item" charge is charged once for each item ordered and the "per shipment" charge is charged once for each shipment we make to you.

	Standard U.S. Mail 7-10 Days	Priority U.S. Mail 2-3 Days	Federal Express 2 Day	Federal Express 1 Day	Mail To Canada 4-7 Days	Mail To The World 7-14 Days
Per Order	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Shipment	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Item	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$6.00

©1997 CHIPS & BITS, INC.

SPLUS297V1

tough). The campaigns start out identically; the developers feel strongly that the player shouldn't have to attempt a new campaign from a completely different perspective when they already have to deal with totally new units. And the units certainly are different–unlike *Warcraft II* these differences are noticeable; human forces have "fast units, average firepower, good weapon ranges, [and] low armor for units and buildings" whereas Tauran forces have "slower units, high firepower, shorter weapon ranges, [and] good armor for units and buildings." There are a variety of weapons types, including indirect weapons from low level squad light weapons on up to the dreaded artillery.

A human gunship

For a title that's just going to sneak onto the gaming scene, *Fallen Haven*–even in its beta form–is a surprising game. While it's too early to tell for certain, it should be one of those little titles that grabs the limelight with its easy-to-approach gameplay. Sure, it uses elements from other games… sure, it's not very deep or complex… Even so, it's (gasp!) *fun.* –S.U.

OUT OF THE BLACK

A slew of new surprises from I-Magic

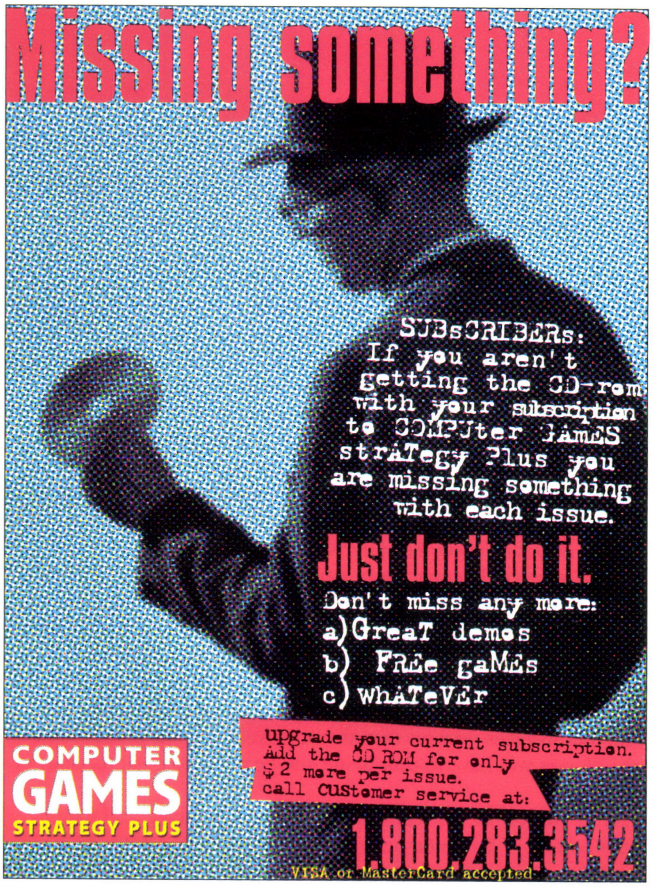
In addition to the products discussed here, the folks at I-Magic and their various developers are already pressing digits on a host of new titles. *The Great Battles of Alexander* is only the first in what is being called *The Ancient Battles Series*. Some other generals that Erudite has under consideration for future games are Julius Caesar, Attila the Hun, and Hannibal.

A follow-up to I-Magic's popular business sim *Capitalism* is also underway. Called *Capitalism Plus* and due out early in '97, this Windows 95 version adds a variety of real-world maps (so you can simulate a particular region or play the entire world without having Tokyo appear next to New York), a map editor (Pangea, anyone?), and e-mail or hot-seat play. This update should hold you over until *Capitalism II* (planned for a late '97 release), which should add, among other things, Internet play.

Stanley Associates, developers of the computer versions of *5th Fleet* and *Wooden Ships & Iron Men*, has signed on to do *Semper Fi*, a wargame of Marine Corps combat. While I-Magic is still pretty secretive about the title, they tell us that it will be turn-based with a top-down view and game play in the *Steel Panthers* style.

While they are not talking specifics, you can be sure that existing engines will not be tossed aside. Wild Bill would like *iF-22 ASF* to be the first in a new virtual battlefield series wherein gamers could link up games (air or ground) to fight a large battle. I-Magic already has an armload of ideas for a *Destiny II*, but hasn't announced for certain that a follow-on will be produced. They are, however, committed to the *Destiny Academy*, an on-line information source/meeting place at I-Magic's web site. In fact, the *Academy* has been so popular that Wild Bill wants to implement academies for all new titles, starting with the just-released *Harpoon Classic '97*.

Interactive Magic may even be looking into doing something for that most hard-core of all "gaming" audiences, the U.S. Military; says Wild Bill: "We're considering a DOD contract … to do a land-based military simulation. We think that it would be along *Harpoon* lines and we're pretty excited about it." –S.U.


Missing something?

SUBSCRIBERS:
If you aren't getting the CD-rom with your subscription to COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS you are missing something with each issue.

Just don't do it.

Don't miss any more:
a) GreaT demos
b) FREe gaMEs
c) whaTeVEr

upgrade your current subscription. Add the CD ROM for only $2 more per issue. call customer service at:

1.800.283.3542

VISA or MasterCard accepted

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS

SCHWERPUNKT PC WARGAMES
WAR IN THE EAST SERIES

Announcing the fifth game in our exciting "War In The East Series."
IZYUM
Other games available for the serious historian/wargamers:
LENINGRAD CRIMEA
KIEV ROSTOV

FEATURES
Neglected WWII Eastern Front Battles
Easy to Learn
Aggressive Computer Opponent
Advanced Fog of War
PBEM Capability • SVGA Graphics
Runs under DOS, Windows 3.1 or Windows 95
"Pleasant surprise…appeals to the grognard."
Strategy Plus
"Cutting edge and innovative…a lot of fun."
Wargamers Monthly

XX 73 5-5-3
XX 22 2-2-6
XXX 2G F 4-6-3
XXX 2G E 6-4-5

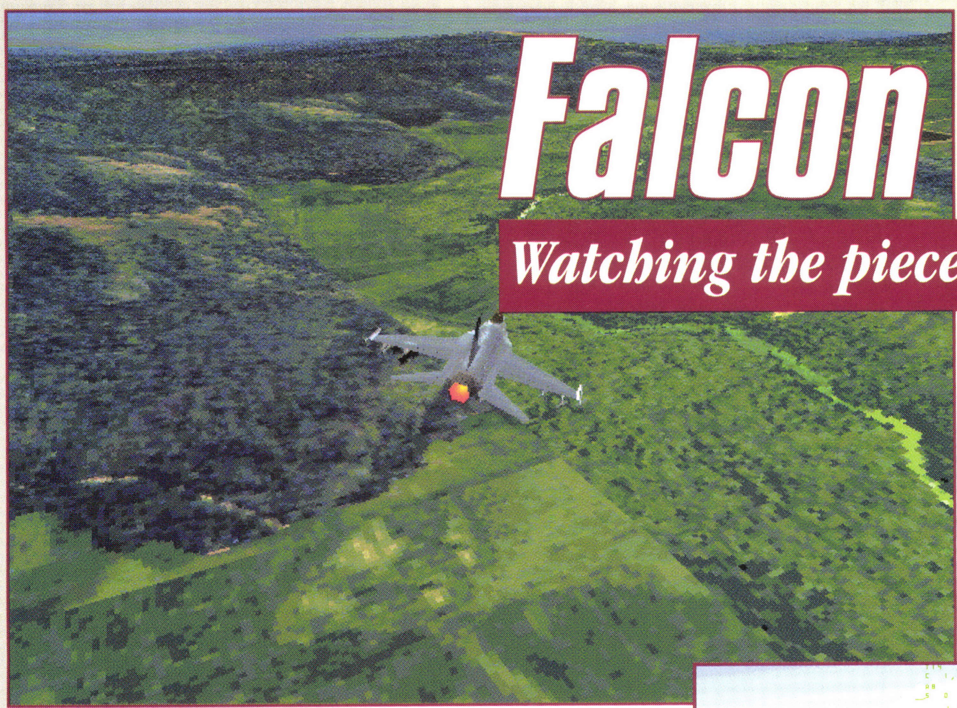
TO ORDER
By Mail: Send check or money order for $29.95 per game, plus $3.00 S&H (TX residents add 6.75% tax) per order to:
Schwerpunkt
2483 Woodbury, Suite 150 • Pearland, TX 77584-4801
Credit Card: Software Plus 1-800-324-7638
Europe: Strategic Plus Software +44-181-977-8088
Australia: Vortigern Strategic Software +11-61-66-891-919

For Free Demo: 713-997-1209 or schwerpt@ghgcorp.com
Visit our website at: http://www.ghgcorp.com/schwerpt

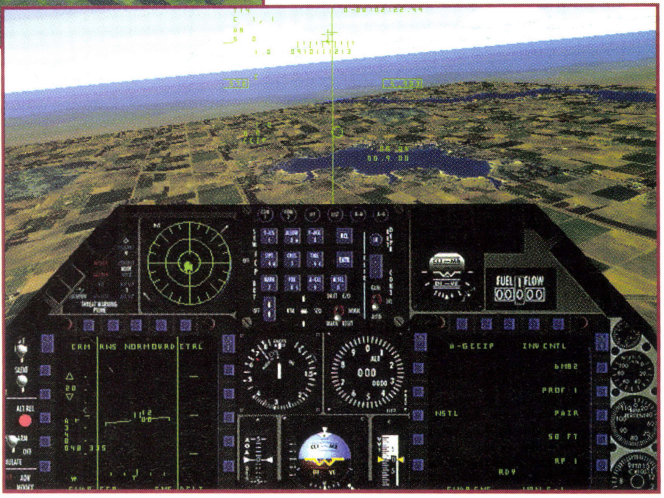
by Steve Wartofsky

Falcon 4.0

Watching the pieces come together



In this game things will be happening all the time



The simulation offers a full suite of instruments

The fresh information we've gotten recently on this simulation is two-fold; at the general level, Leon Rosenshein informed us via telephone interview that nothing substantial in *Falcon 3.0* would be missing from *Falcon 4.0*. In other words, there will be a real-time, dynamic battle engine; we'll have the full complement of instruments and displays, updated to the F-16 Block 52 C APG-68 and Harm Targeting Radar systems (as per the second of Rosenshein's designer notes); full-scale mission planning will be available, and instant action, single mission, campaign and multi-player will all be given thorough treatment.

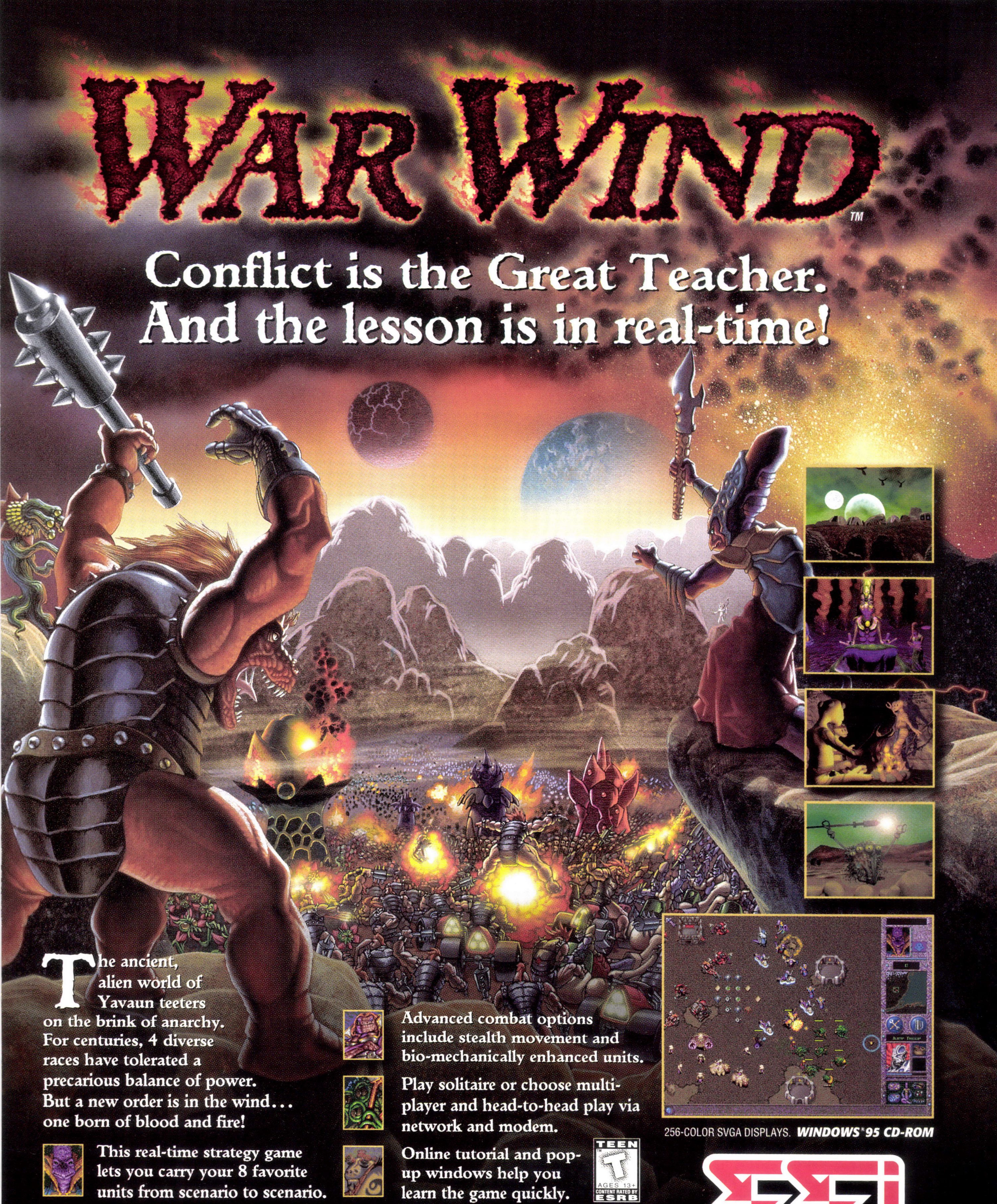
As of this interview, the team has been meeting with successes integrating the battlefield engine with the simulation. This is one of the many challenges being worked out as the pieces of this incredibly complex software come together. One of the things we discussed with Leon was the nature of the dynamic engine players will be working with. The most interesting news here is that this engine will be running *all the time* the software is up; in other words, you could theoretically be working out your mission planning in that portion of the design, have your base come under attack and be blown up before you ever got off the ground. Similarly, changes in the FEBA or in the disposition of your or your opponents' air and ground forces will occur, whether in the air on-mission or on the ground; so, while the intelligence you're working with while planning a mission will be the best available, the dynamism of the system means it won't necessarily be "perfect" intelligence on where everything is situated, or on its current status. Mission intelligence will thus be quite realistic in scope.

The other major piece of news is in the success MicroProse seems to be having developing the distributed campaign for network play. Rosenshein's real-world experience developing technology for the military apparently means he's always got in the back of his mind ideas about how to work out multi-player simulation as efficiently as possible. Since *Falcon 4.0* has been built from the ground up *as* a multi-player, networkable simulation, each component of the design is being optimized to make the passing of information across the network as accurate and efficient as possible. This is particularly important because multi-player also incorporates the dynamic battlefield engine as one of the modes (campaign) players can work with across the network; handling players' aircraft *and* the updating of all players on the status of the campaign could be one of the major achievements of this generation of multi-player air combat simulation.

...you could theoretically be working out your mission...have your base come under attack and be blown up before you ever got off the ground.

Multi-player is mostly on spec, with one possible gray area: whether or not players could enter into a multi-player session while on mission without disturbing the flow of the mission. While the design is taking into account ways of handling the dropping-out of aircraft and players from the network (in other words, there may be a brief period where one player's aircraft – if suddenly vacated due to the player's leaving or being knocked off the network – flies straight and level before the computer AI takes over for that absent player), it looks like, at least for now, players will have to coordinate and be ready to go at the start of the mission.

All in all, *Falcon 4.0* seems to be progressing nicely, and will no doubt be one of *the* major achievements of 1997. Watch for further info here as we get fresh news. ■


WAR WIND™
Conflict is the Great Teacher.
And the lesson is in real-time!

The ancient, alien world of Yavaun teeters on the brink of anarchy. For centuries, 4 diverse races have tolerated a precarious balance of power. But a new order is in the wind... one born of blood and fire!

- This real-time strategy game lets you carry your 8 favorite units from scenario to scenario.
- Advanced combat options include stealth movement and bio-mechanically enhanced units.
- Play solitaire or choose multi-player and head-to-head play via network and modem.
- Online tutorial and pop-up windows help you learn the game quickly.

TEEN
T
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

256-COLOR SVGA DISPLAYS. ***WINDOWS*®*95 CD-ROM***

SSI®

A MINDSCAPE® COMPANY

www.warwind.com

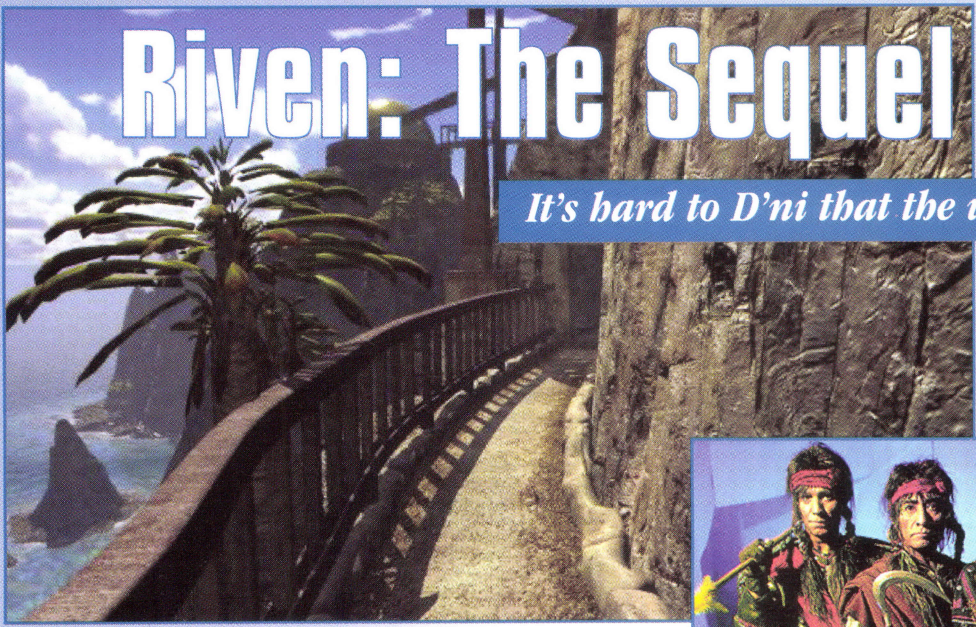
DREAMFORGE™

Developed by DreamForge Intertainment. WAR WIND is a trademark of Strategic Simulations, Inc., a Mindscape Company. Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. © 1996 Strategic Simulations, Inc. All rights reserved.

by Cindy Yans

Riven: The Sequel to Myst

It's hard to D'ni that the waiting room is full



◀ *Entrance to tunnel 429 of the Catherine-kabob roller coaster*

"I realized the moment I fell into the fissure that the book would not be destroyed as I had planned...The ending is not yet written." - Atrus

While fishing and swimming through the buckets of hype about the long awaited follow-up to the best selling cd-rom of all time, one can go mad diving through the salty depths but will still come up basically flounderless. The question, "What's it gonna be about?" has been bandied about. Bandied yes, but answered? Well, no. Not concretely. The question, "What's it gonna be *like*?" was probably easier to address.

It's gonna be like *Myst* — which is certainly no surprise to members of the if-it-ain't-broke school of game design. For any product which has spawned the number of clones that *Myst* has, it would be silly *not* to try and recreate what met with such wild acclaim the first time. *Shivers, Lighthouse, Timelapse, Qin, Obsidian* — the list goes on and on of games which employ the sparsely-populated-world-filled-with-mystical-devices technique. Rand Miller, co-designer of both *Myst* games told CNN, "For the sequel, I think people are going to get the same feeling, though I don't think that...well, we're not looking to give them something completely different."

> **"We're not working on the sequel, we're working on the next big thing. We want to be the thing that tops Myst."**
>
> **–The Brothers Miller**

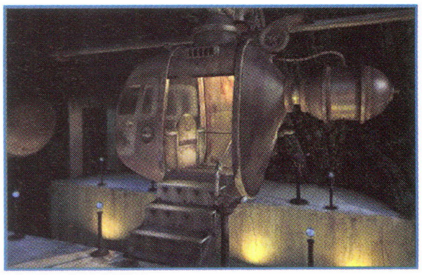
So it's evident that *Riven* (pronounced as though it has two V's) promises yet another journey into one of these worlds — a multiply-islanded world known (quite appropriately) as Riven. The story? In a humorously cryptic fashion, Cyan's web site (**www.cyan.com**) provides a very peculiar report about the quest for *Riven* story information. I fear that even at the time you read this there will be no specifics there. Whetting the public's appetite, however, when you *know* they're going to buy dinner is delicious torture indeed.

From all sources at least one thing seems to be clear: *Riven* will begin where *Myst* left off. At the end of the first game when Atrus wrote ceaselessly into his journal, he was troubled. It seems that he alluded to a "greater foe." His wife Catherine has become imprisoned in another world, one called Riven which was ironically created at the pen of Atrus' father Gehn, who is also trapped. In the next chapter, the player will travel to Riven to help Atrus free his family.

The *Riven* world promises to be much more fully populated than *Myst*'s, including over 70 video sequences with live actors. Inhuman creatures will exist as well, and will be embodied not as monsters per se, but as uniquely crafted beasts with peculiar textures and features. Texture, in fact, has been a primary focus in the graphical representation of the Millers' latest world. Clouds now flow through what had been a cloudless sky. Water reflects its light sources. Earth textures become more and more realistic. Brighter colors saturate the palettes with rich detail. Focus on detail here has been the key to the visual design.

As for the puzzles, Cyan's Richard Vanervende promises better structured puzzles and hopes that they will be more taxing than before. This information is likely to be greeted with cheers and gasps alike. The reaction to *Myst*'s difficulty level was very diverse, even among hard core gamers; and the frustration-level tightrope is a difficult one to walk.

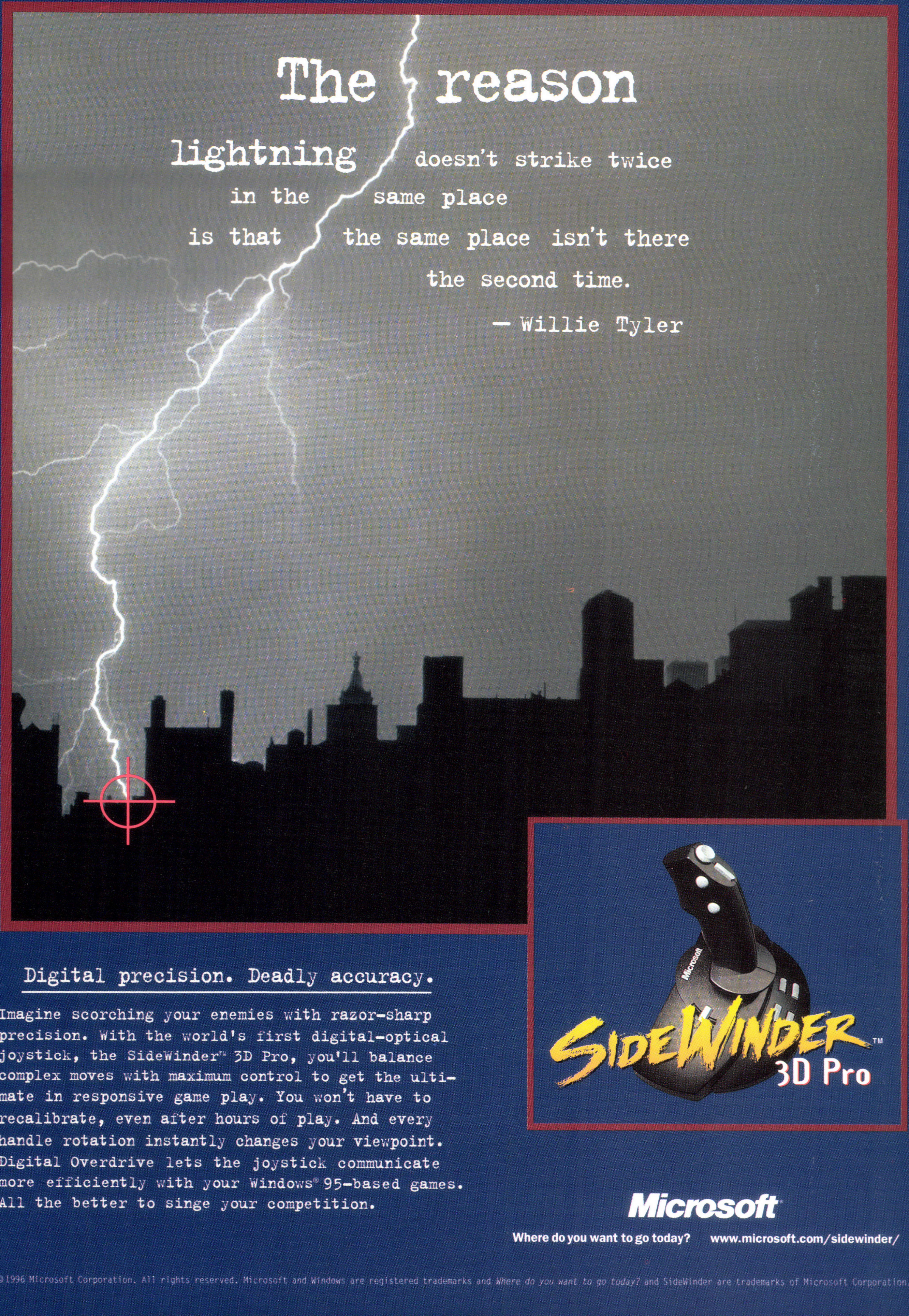
▲ *Happy natives in party garb*



▲ *Perhaps this strange craft lacks a sound puzzle*

▲ *Caution! Bridge freezes before roadway*

Now that they can afford (due to the unprecedented success of their first "child") to go all out, the Millers are sparing no resources to create the best thing on the shelf since, well, *Myst*. With respect to their intentions, said the Millers to *Newsweek*, "We're not working on the sequel, we're working on the next big thing. We want to be the thing that tops *Myst*." They are certainly in a looooong line of others with the same goal. The thing is, they're not at the *end* of that line. They created it — so who better to breed the next champion? We hope *Myst* had a good time while it was out to stud. ■


The reason
lightning doesn't strike twice
in the same place
is that the same place isn't there
the second time.
— Willie Tyler
Microsoft
SideWinder™
3D Pro

Digital precision. Deadly accuracy.

Imagine scorching your enemies with razor-sharp precision. With the world's first digital-optical joystick, the SideWinder™ 3D Pro, you'll balance complex moves with maximum control to get the ultimate in responsive game play. You won't have to recalibrate, even after hours of play. And every handle rotation instantly changes your viewpoint. Digital Overdrive lets the joystick communicate more efficiently with your Windows® 95-based games. All the better to singe your competition.

Microsoft

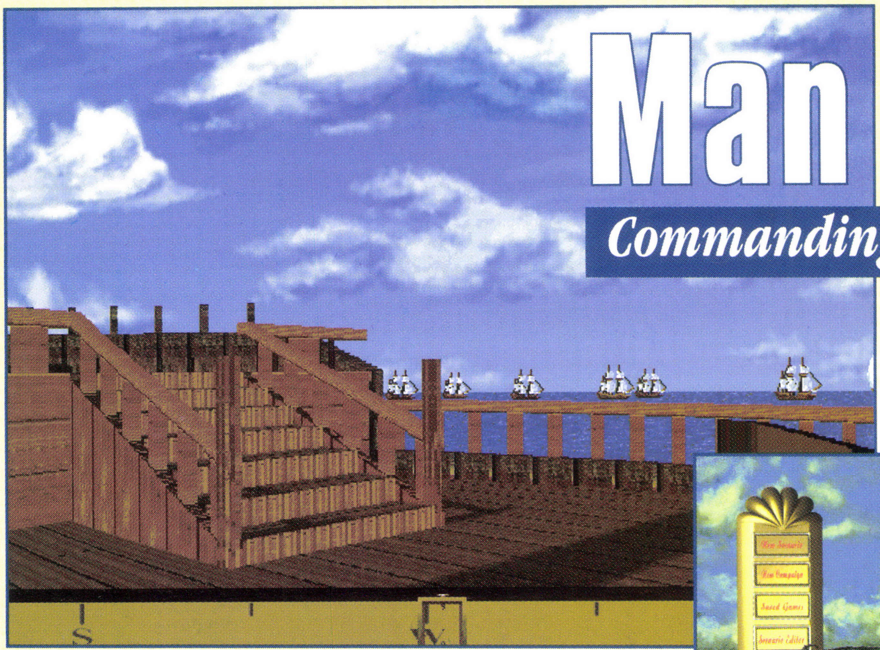
Where do you want to go today? www.microsoft.com/sidewinder/

©1996 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks and *Where do you want to go today?* and SideWinder are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.

by Scott Udell

Man of War

Commanding from the poop deck



The view of from your ship during the execution phase

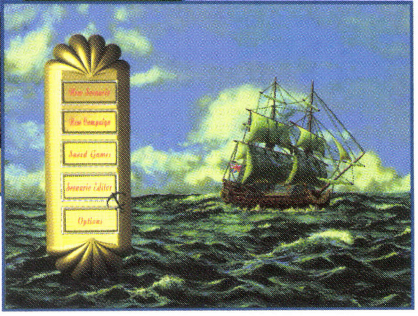
Even if you've never heard of Strategy First, chances are you've at least seen something produced by this Montréal-based developer. In addition to their own hockey game *Solid Ice* (distributed by empire Interactive), Strategy First did most of the gorgeous graphics for SSI's *Steel Panthers I* and *II* and *Age of Rifles*. Despite this background, it may be something of a surprise to hear of their next effort: a serious wargame set during the Age of Sail. Called *Man of War*, the game will cover battle on the high seas (and, unlike Avalon Hill's *Wooden Ships & Iron Men*, also in littoral areas when called for) from the period roughly covering the American Revolution through the age of Napoleon.

With the current flood of games based in this period (if you can call three to four games a flood), one must wonder just what the team at Strategy First would come up with to set their game of fighting ships apart from the others. In the case of *Man of War*, it will be the command perspective, both figuratively and literally. On the figurative side, gamers take on the role of "admiral of the fleet." This means you don't have complete control over every ships; says senior programmer Justin Przedwojewski, "…we're not giving the user the power of a god." Indeed, "the only ship you have 100% control over is your own." Instead, gamers choose from a simple set of orders to issue to the various elements of the fleet; simple both because the system of flags used to communicate during this period allowed nothing else and because, as overall commander, you wouldn't be issuing specific rudder and sail commands to every ship. As often happened, your orders will not necessarily be followed; a ship or squadron may find itself engaged and unable to complete them, or it may just not "see" the order flag (particularly a problem for those portions of your fleet some distance from your vessel).

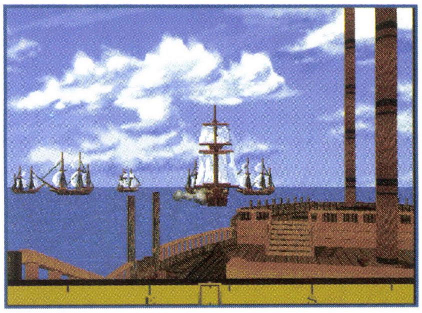
> ***…you watch the battle play out in real-time 3D***

While your planning takes place from a typical 2D map view (with an historically appropriate parchment look to it), your perspective on the execution of a four minute turn becomes quite literal: you watch the battle play out in real-time 3D, from your command ship. As the four minute turn passes (you'll be able to adjust the speed at which it happens), you'll be able to move about your ship and watch the battle from any perspective a real admiral may have had. Actions quite distant from you will be hard to make out, while those up close will command attention. Strategy First is working on a complete set of different 3D models for the ship classes to be included in the game (right now there are 20 classes in five gun increments, but this will be consolidated for the final game). You will see the flash of cannon fire and hear their thunder; while there may be some smoke effects it won't be overwhelming (says Don McFatridge, president of Strategy First, "We don't want to over do the fog of war"). Boarding actions between distant ships will probably be portrayed with animations, while such actions involving your own vessel may be played out with video clips.

During the execution of the turn you are basically an observer, but observation is important because once the four minute execution phase is over the game drops back into the 2D planning mode, where you'll be able to issue another set of orders. Four minute turns were chosen because Strategy First believes that was pretty much the smallest time increment a commander from this period would have had for issuing orders (remember, fighting with sail tended to be a slow, ponderous affair).



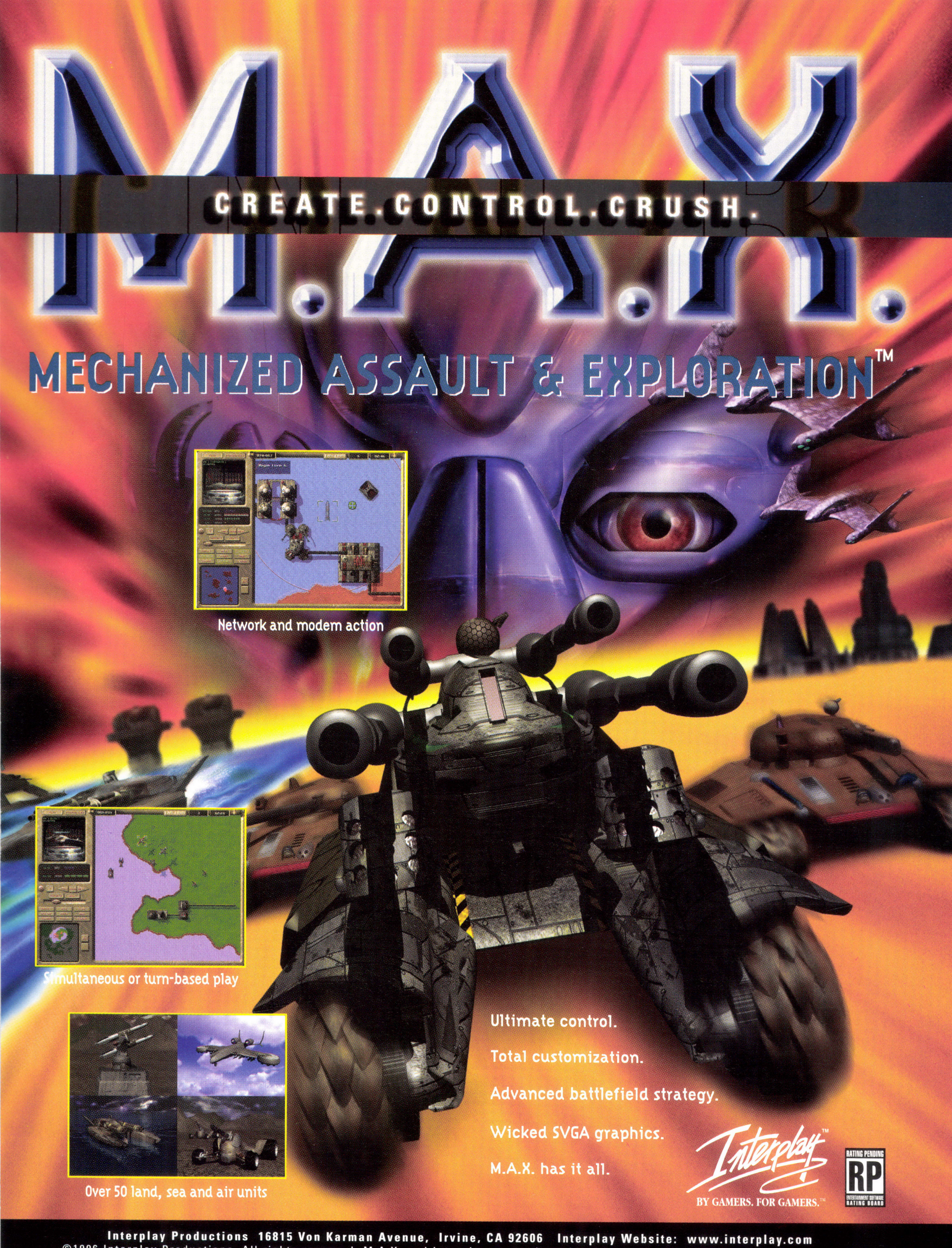
▲ *This "oil painting" style of artwork will be used throughout the game*



▲ *You'll be able to see realistic effects (such as the smoke from gunfire) as the battle plays out*

Lest the hard-core wargamer out there start thinking, "Oh, no! Ship *Doom*," let me mention that the underlying game engine is based heavily on a game from the "*grognard*" wargame company, Simulations Canada (SimCan). As long-time computer wargamers probably know, what SimCan games lacked in graphics flash (often they had none!), they made up for with research and design; with such code as a base, Strategy First intends to ensure that *Man of War* will give the hard-core gamer something to sink his or her teeth into. Current plans call for twelve scenarios, a scenario editor, and possibly a single player, linear campaign. There will be generic ship and crew ratings, realistic doctrine for the AI controlled vessels, and possibly two player network play.

If all goes as planned, Strategy First plans to launch *Man of War* sometime this coming Spring. Justin Przedwojewski says "We don't want it to be a run of the mill wargame; we want to advance the whole genre…." While only some actual time under virtual sail will tell, an initial look at the game hints that Strategy First may just do so. ■


M.A.X.
CREATE.CONTROL.CRUSH.
MECHANIZED ASSAULT & EXPLORATION™

Network and modem action

Simultaneous or turn-based play

Over 50 land, sea and air units

Ultimate control.

Total customization.

Advanced battlefield strategy.

Wicked SVGA graphics.

M.A.X. has it all.

Interplay™
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™
RATING PENDING
RP
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE RATING BOARD

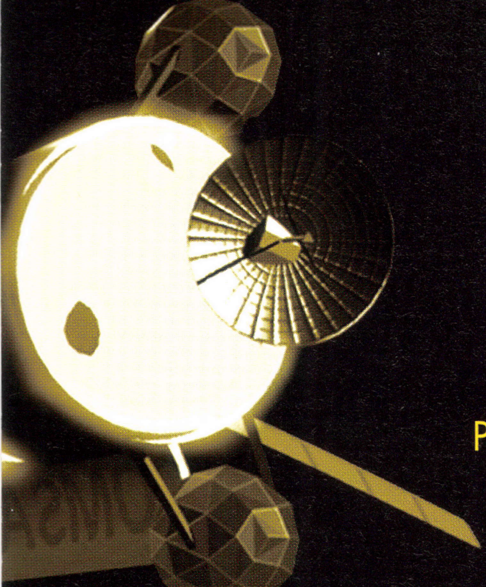
Interplay Productions 16815 Von Karman Avenue, Irvine, CA 92606 Interplay Website: www.interplay.com

©1996 Interplay Productions. All rights reserved. M.A.X. and Interplay are trademarks of Interplay Productions. All rights reserved.

To those million fans who are addicted to Command & Conquer . . .
We just upped your dosage.
COMMAND & CONQUER™
FOR WINDOWS® 95

Command & Conquer Gold Edition for Windows® 95!

ALL-NEW GOLD EDITION FEATURES



Super VGA Graphics intensify
realism and excitement

Internet Head-to-Head play

Play against competitors across the world
with Westwood Chat*

New Command & Conquer Theme Pack includes
screen savers, icons and desktop patterns

GAME OF THE YEAR
COMPUTER GAME OF THE YEAR
BEST STRATEGY GAME
COMMAND & CONQUER
Westwood
NEW INTERNET HEAD-TO-HEAD PLAY

Repair
Sell
Map

Incoming! This Winter!

For Windows® 95.

Westwood™ STUDIOS

www.westwood.com

* Requires existing Internet access

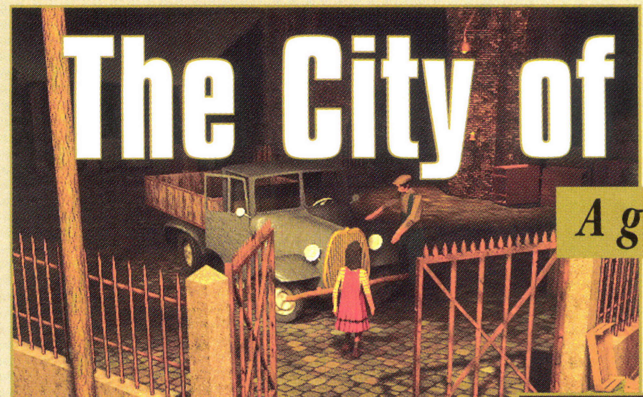
Command & Conquer is a trademark of Westwood Studios, Inc. ©1995, 1996 Westwood Studios, Inc. All rights reserved. Windows 95 is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation.

PREVIEW

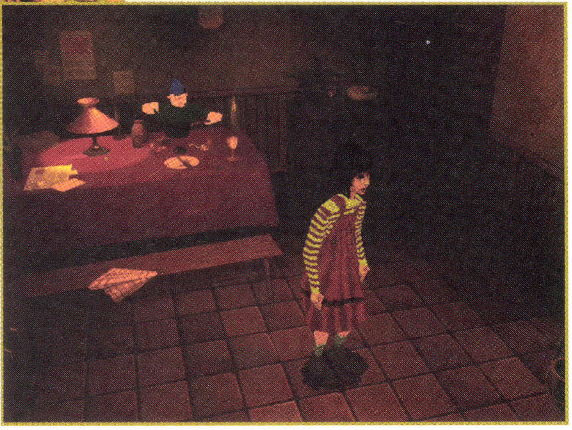
by Cindy Yans

The City of Lost Children

A growing market for the nightmare



Miette encounters the world's most polygonal trucker



Miette shows some disgust at one of Santa's elves

In a nebulous underworld amid alleys and rubble, between stairway and waterway rises a haunting tale of darkness and fear. A strange and lonely soul known as Krank has lost the ability to dream. Because of this lack of sleep catharsis, Krank grows old beyond his years and will go mad lest he find a way to remedy the situation. Philoprogenetive only unto himself, Krank arranges for the kidnapping of hoards of young children in order to rob them of their dreams so that he may be restored. He prowls a seamless ocean, reaching again and again for that which will never be truly his.

Anyone who has seen the film of the same name by Jeunet & Caro may never be able to forget its frightening imagery — and indeed it is tone more than storyline which has inspired the developers to obtain licensing for this work. The plot is similar to but not identical with that of the film, and takes the player as 10- year-old Miette, a wise-beyond-her-years orphan, through the shadows of the City in an attempt to locate and free the captive youths. Miette inhabits the Three Doves Orphanage under the tyranny of Pieuvre, the ruthless matron. Pieuvre is a scuttling creature who we know to be Siamese twins but who *appears* to be a spider in a quadruple breasted suit. Two brains exist, but she generally speaks but one thought in double-voiced unison.

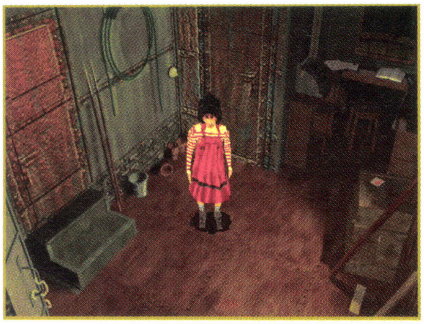
> *To recreate the environment of The City of Lost Children is an artists' dream come true, not to mention an immense challenge; and the artwork we've seen so far seems to admirably capture the dark and somber netherworld.*

One, a circus strongman, is mourning the loss of his little brother Denree who has disappeared into the clutches of the dreamless Krank. Miette and One are tossed into the melting bucket of fate and become a team wherein he will protect her from the shadows of the City if she will in turn help him recover Denree.

To recreate the environment of *The City of Lost Children* is an artists' dream come true, not to mention an immense challenge; and the artwork we've seen so far seems to admirably capture the dark and somber netherworld. In over 30 rooms with over 100 explicit scenes, rendered backgrounds dotted with 3-D motion-captured characters offer a harmonious feel, and the 360-degree free range engine allows third person movement into virtually every nook and cranny of the game-space. Detailed attention is being given to special effects with respect to shadow-casting, mist, lightening, etc., and each room will have its own sound atmosphere: the sound of fire in the classroom, birds and cats in the orphanage courtyard and seagulls and the sea in the pier scenes.

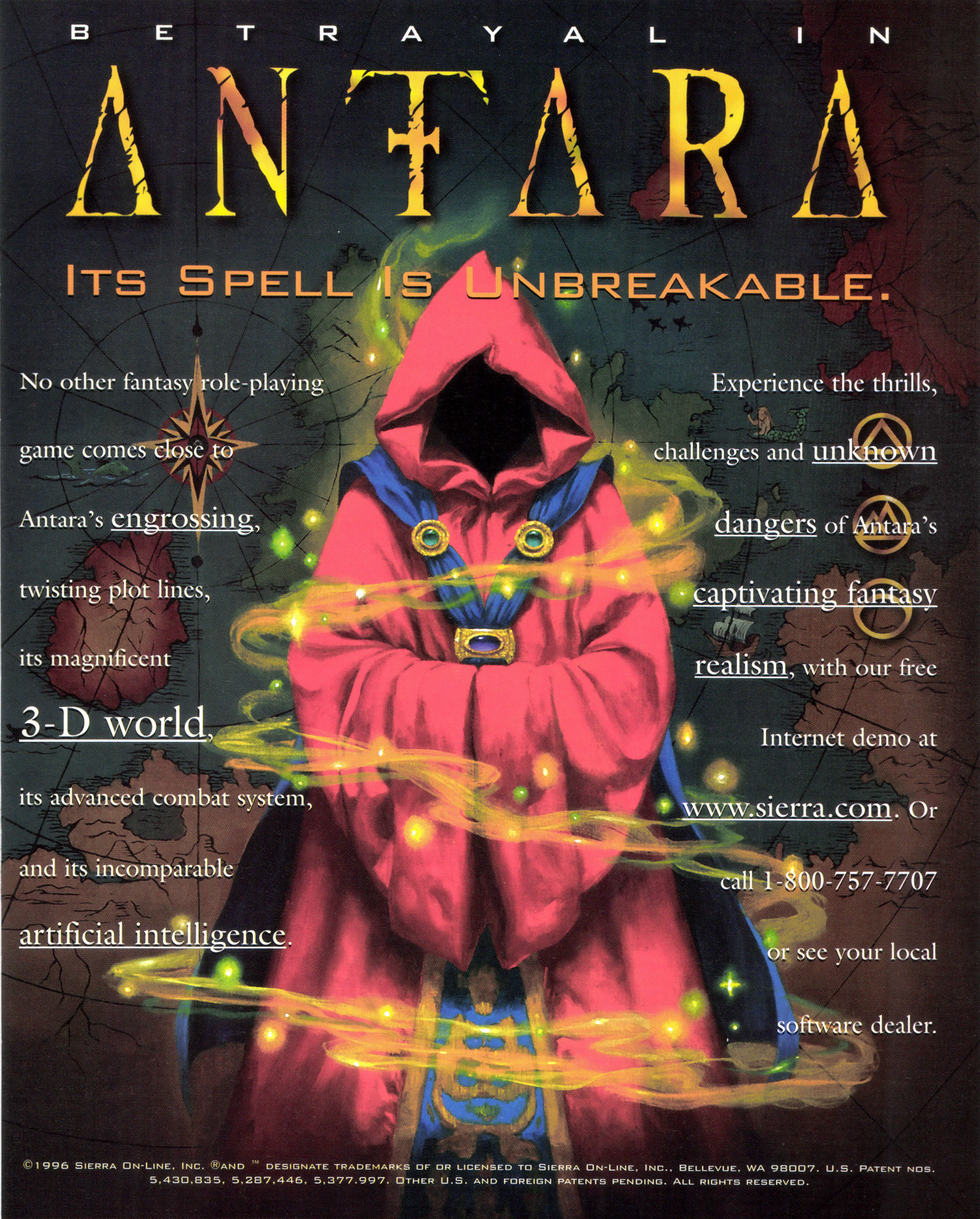
A feature with tons of potential is one where the player may choose to alter the camera-angle view from many locations. When the character is in a move-to-the-next-screen situation, the camera angle changes automatically (obviously) but when in the same screen, the player may choose to alter the view by using his space bar and better perspectives may be revealed. Up to eight camera angles are available.

Over 20 motion-captured characters interact with Miette in the search for *les enfants perdu*. Some are original characters from the film, such as the iron man One (played by Ron Perlman in the film) and Pieuvre, who was realized in motion capture thanks to two real actresses who were tied together at the hip (Krazy Glue was suggested, but there is only so much that some will sacrifice for their craft and skin generally doesn't qualify); and some are characters created specifically for the game such as the orphanage dog, the Tramp, the Lighthouse Watchman and the Old Fisherman (with Hemingway's *Sea* not far behind). We will *not* see the clones of Krank, which may be disappointing to lovers of the film — but it is certainly understandable that the complex psychological nature of their interaction might not fit well into the framework of a traditional adventure. I was hoping they'd risk it however.



One of eight available camera angles

All in all, Psygnosis should be gratified that this is an adventure to anticipate if for no other reason than the dark and surreal nature of its story and characters. Anyone who was affected by the film will certainly be interested in seeing what becomes of this undertaking, and anyone who has *not* seen it and who has a taste for the strangely disturbing should probably rent it. Kafka would be proud. ■



BETRAYAL IN ANTARA

ITS SPELL IS UNBREAKABLE.

No other fantasy role-playing game comes close to Antara's engrossing, twisting plot lines, its magnificent 3-D world, its advanced combat system, and its incomparable artificial intelligence.

Experience the thrills, challenges and unknown dangers of Antara's captivating fantasy realism, with our free Internet demo at www.sierra.com. Or call 1-800-757-7707 or see your local software dealer.

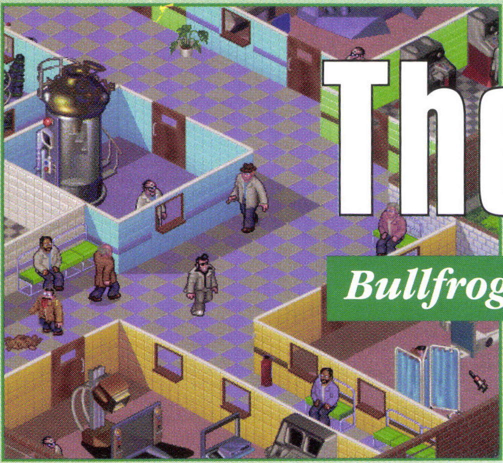
©1996 Sierra On-Line, Inc. ® and ™ designate trademarks of or licensed to Sierra On-Line, Inc., Bellevue, WA 98007. U.S. Patent nos. 5,430,835, 5,287,446, 5,377,997. Other U.S. and foreign patents pending. All rights reserved.

SIERRA®

by Scott Udell

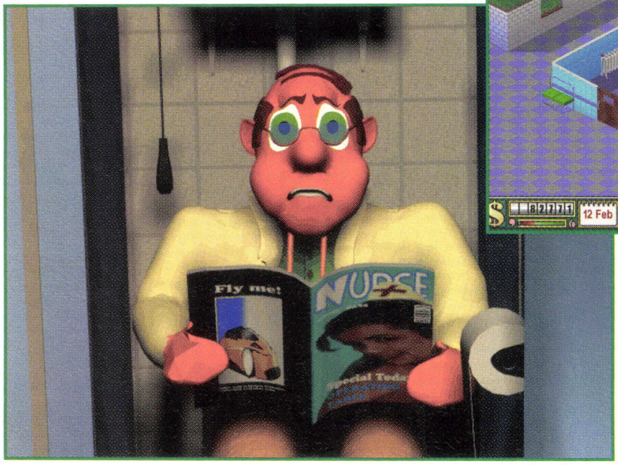
Theme Hospital

Bullfrog wants to treat your gaming funny bone



◀ *Oh no! An Elvisoid delusional is on the loose!*

Theme Park, the first game in Bullfrog's *Designer Series,* was a devilishly hard but quite funny game which let players try to out-Disney Disney. It was a big hit (at least overseas), but how was Bullfrog to follow up all that fun and frivolity (and extreme gaming challenge)? Well, with *Theme Hospital*, of course… "Yeah, right," you say. Usually drab, often dreary and depressing, a hospital would be about as far away from the fun of an amusement parka (err, park; sorry, but Winter *has* arrived in Vermont) as you can get, right? Nevertheless, the Bullfrog team tackled it, and as Mark Webley (producer and lead designer) tells it, "…it quickly became apparent that if we were going to make this game great, then we would need to unshackle ourselves and allow ourselves some artistic freedom…. it was also necessary to avoid real-life illnesses, none of which should be the subject of a computer game. What we needed to add was humour. *Theme Hospital* was never supposed to be a *simulation* of a hospital, but a game *based around* running a hospital…."

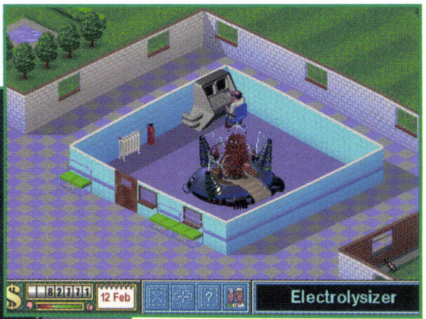


▲ *Just fill this cup…*

> *'…it quickly became apparent that if we were going to make this game great, then we would need to unshackle ourselves and allow ourselves some artistic freedom…'*
>
> *– Mark Webley,*
> *Producer and Lead Designer*

With tongue depressors firmly planted in their cheeks, the *Theme Hospital* team set forth to turn the "business-is-fun" formula of *Theme Park* towards the medical field. Your "ultimate goal is to make money while having fun." You start the game with a lowly clinic, building your medical empire into "the largest, most sophisticated and profitable hospital ever." The design decisions are yours: buy that new bloaty head re-inflator, or make do with the old one? You need a new maternity ward, but you can only place it near the exit or the OR; in the former, you risk babies wandering out the door, the later, wandering in to surgery.

For both humor value and to avoid being offensive, the team had to come up with a variety of, er, "unique" afflictions and maladies. Only a few have been unveiled, including such horrors as "Bloaty Head disease, which requires the inflated cranium to be lanced to expel any unwanted gasses and then reinflated using a rather special air pump, or Hairyitis, which needs to be treated with a high voltage electrolysis machine… and of course that well known psychological disorder that causes people to dress and act like Elvis!" (are they sure this isn't a *real* disease?)



▲ ***The treatment for Hairyitis is high-voltage electrolysis–OUCH!***

The software technology going into *Theme Hospital* is impressive. Because they want to populate your hospitals with dozens of staff and patients while at the same time keeping storage and memory requirements down, Bullfrog improved upon their in-house sprite animator, making it easy for the artists to mix and match body elements (head, body, limbs, etc.) and accessories (bags, shoes, and the like) quickly. The parts can be animated and combined without much overhead in the final game, resulting in a much more interesting mix of hospital characters.

Despite the "cartooniness" of the game, Bullfrog has designed the characters so they move about realistically; for example, you'll see a person open a door, walk through, and pull it closed behind them instead of just passing through the door. To complement all the pretty pictures, the design team has implemented what they call their Complex Engine, an AI system which drives the characters (both staff like doctors, nurses, and admin folks and the patients of the hospital). Possible actions are chopped up into little bits; it's up to the Complex Engine and its rules to combine them all into realistic behavior. Complementing the Complex Engine are the advanced path generation algorithms (some of which sound like those used in some DOD simulation stuff I worked with); instead of wandering long, out-of-the way paths to get from A to B, characters will follow the generally direct route (unless, of course, they are *meant* to be lost).

As usual, Bullfrog is keeping the juicier details pretty close; it will be up to gamers to figure out the ins-and-outs of a twisted-from-reality hospital, but potential medical moguls will have to wait until early '97 for a chance to treat their Hairyitis. ■

Kicks
Bass.
PC CD-ROM &
WINDOWS 95
THE ART OF
Fly Fishing
VOLUME ONE
Rivers of the British Isles
PHILIPS
Library
Top View
Report
Review
The realistic sights, sounds, psychology and art of fly fishing come to life on CD-ROM, in this challenging multi-level skill game.
PC-CD ROM
WINDOWS® 95

Competition Player John Austin.
River Test, peg 4 at 10:00.

Tired of catching bass? Ready for a challenging fishing sim? Welcome to the relaxing and challenging world of fly fishing on your PC. *The Art of Fly Fishing Volume I* recreates this skillful sport using live videotaped footage. Fish three of the United Kingdom's finest trout and salmon rivers: the Blackwater, Spey and Test. With the soothing sounds of nature and the intricacies of choosing the right equipment and flies, this fishing simulation puts you right in the water.

The Art of Fly Fishing is not just a fun fishing simulation; it also contains an extensive library of information to help you learn more about the fish, their habitat and their behavior. Choose your fishing spot based on conditions including time of day, season, temperature and water currents. Once you've chosen the right conditions, a variety of flies and rods will help you land the fish of your dreams, provided your casting skill is up to par. After you've practiced, invite up to 5 friends to enter into a fishing competition where the winner receives a cash prize and the opportunity to upgrade his equipment. *The Art of Fly Fishing*; the only fly fishing simulation for your PC.

To order, see your local retailer or call 1-800-340-7888

A R C

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

PHILIPS

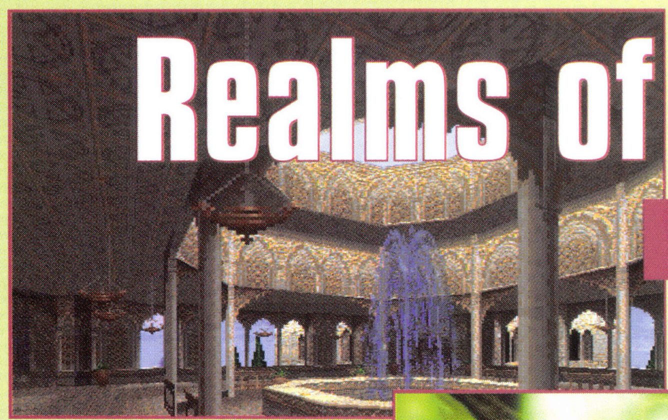
PHILIPS

©1996 Arc Development. Published
by Gametek, Inc. Distributed by
Philips Media. All rights reserved

by Cindy Yans

Realms of the Haunting

Sealing the fate of infinity



◀ *A fountain in full spurt graces the dome*

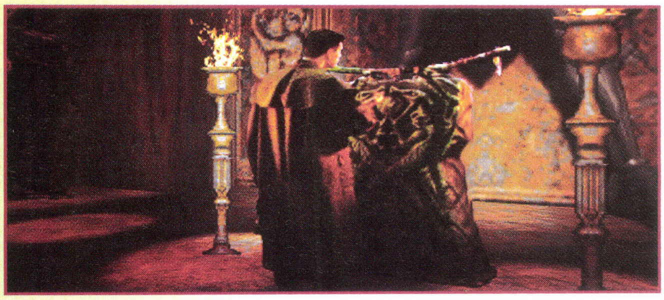
▲ *Falling into the salad bowl of time*

> *"Goodness reflects the light and Evil dwells in the dark. These are the mirrors of the soul, the reflections of our minds...choose well..."*

Real horror for many lies not in graphic visions of mass carnage rising from mad violence, nor in mutant manifestations of the misbegotten — real horror is perhaps more subtly realized.

Gremlin Interactive has sprouted a horror tale the shoots of which rise from the legend of the Apocalypse. It is a tale which will touch those whose biggest fears are connected to the ancient unknown — to the formation of the planes of heaven and hell during the birth of the duality of human nature. Its roots reach back to 12000 BC when it is said that the Soulstone was cast into Hell, forming the gate of the Abyss and creating the Power known to future man as Abaddon — the one who is the keeper of the Shrive (the key to the Abyss). The Soulstone is a channel for man's thoughts from which the Powers of all that is good and evil are able to take on a physical aspect. Also during the casting of the Soulstone, the Seven Seals of the gate of the Abyss became bound to time. Confused? Just wait.

The trunk of this tale is wrapped around the emergence of further entities who struggle through the ages in dual pursuits — to either destroy or protect the Seven Seals (shades of the film *The Seventh Sign*). Aelf (a.k.a. Michael the Archangel) acquires the Shrive and separates it into two pieces — the Sword of Michael and the...uh...other part, stashing them separately so that if the Seals are destroyed it will be more difficult for the Abyss to be opened and mankind destroyed by darkness. Over centuries, as the seals break one by one, havoc reigns throughout the four realms as the principals play out the constant classic struggle between good and evil.



▲ ***The classic trench coat line is a true compliment to the wizened artifact***

Much more recently, Belial, one of the great Lords of Hell, enslaves the soul of Charles Randall, a preacher in a town called Hellston (which actually exists). Randall died after having discovered Something Awful in the parish house of St. Michael's, former site of the Temple of the Morning Star. This Temple has been a central focus of the Apocalyptic legend through the ages. Belial somehow manages to connect Randall's spirit to the Soulstone. Still with me? Good.

Finally, the branches of *Realms of the Haunting* burgeon as the backstory ends and the gamestory begins. You play the role of Adam Randall, son of Charles, who has dreamed about and is somehow drawn to the Hellston parish house. Adam acquires the broken Seals through an unearthly visitation by Belial, and their proximity eventually actualizes Adam's excursion to St. Michael's, where he will encounter the spirit of his father and the Soulstone. Can this be only the beginning?

The game is a DOS-based first-person action-adventure which allows total freedom of movement in a 3-D photorealistic environment. It mixes the elements of exploration and puzzle solving with *Doom*-like combat (*Under a Killing Moon* meets *Doom*). And to stretch genre boundaries even further, there are role playing elements as well. Over 90 minutes of FMV in the form of hi-res cut scenes are intended to highlight major plot-points without detracting from the gameplay. While this is *always* the intention of designers who include a lot of FMV, it seems likely that this game's loaded triple-genre clip will provide enough gameplay to withstand extended bleary-eyed stasis during the 130 non-interactive film segments.

Adam Randall will be equipped with 12 weapons, 45 magical items and 155 inventory items; and to provide additional human support while up against the 20 motion-captured 3D other-worldly sprites, Adam is joined by the woman of his dreams. Literally — a woman he has dreamed about but never encountered shows up at the house (how convenient!) and she turns out to be Rebecca Trevisard, refugee from the Psychic Friends Network. She becomes a valuable source of information for Adam with her metaphysical powers. But even though she tells him that she too was somehow *called* to the house, can he trust her?

"What we believe to be Angels and Demons are really projections of the minds of mortals," says Paul Green, the game's designer and self-proclaimed aging hippie. So to vex "the minds of mortals," *Realms of the Haunting* promises to engross us in a struggle to prevent the collapse of the Light and the dawn of the new Age of darkness. It draws upon our own generally opaque conclusions about the Beginning, and feeds our ultimate fear of the End. Dig out a copy of the Book of Revelation and prepare. ■

WE KNOW HOW YOU ARE GOING TO DIE

they never attack in hor… seen in

"The Vanguard of a terrifying new level of immersive technology."

—COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

when a
nums.
no early
prospe
secret c
rife the
to appe
of Doo
were w
had trou
order to

his ey…
by the lightning … that's okay.

"...by far the most addictive, multiplayer action game we've ever played."

Quake's greatest addition … levels feature some form … which … If you

— PC MAGAZINE

Deathmatch … curious as it ever was in *Doom*, but much harder. In fact, if … be disappointed th… shots in…

"Quake overwhelms the senses."

—USA TODAY

world is ca… run so slowly. But, thankfully, … Universe … enemy department

"Quake is the biggest, baddest, bloodiest and most atmospheric 3-D action game ever conceived."

—PC GAMER

… gameplay, *Total Mania* is a … on the bigger levels there's more … ring than robot-shooting, which, let's fa…

"Quake is the most satisfying first-person action game of all time."

— BOOT MAGAZINE

that you can target an enemy robot and fire at it … because these can be sold when you get back … converted into valuable credits. … terra… *Total* … emplo… add a…

www.idsoftware.com

Distributed by
GT Interactive Software
www.gtinteractive.com

Quake™ ©1996 Id Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Published by Id Software, Inc. Distributed by GT Interactive Software Corp. MS-DOS® is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies.

QUAKE
full registered version
now available.

the air war rages on

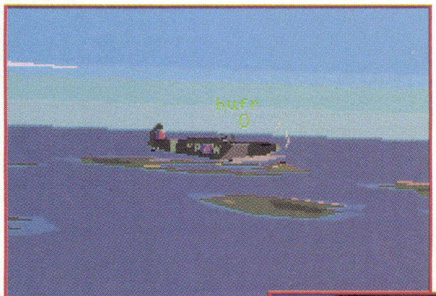
a warbirds update

Warbirds has staked its claim to the hearts and wallets of wanna-be fighter pilots the world over. The on-line skies of Interactive Creations, Inc. are filled with World War II era fighters and bombers. Most evenings, you can find 150 players in the arena. Many of these players will be logged in from Japan, Europe and Australia, as well as North America.

ICI continues to add new features and aircraft to keep the game fresh. The latest release is 1.09r1. This version changed the game significantly with addition of new aircraft and ordnance, flight model changes, alterations to play and improvements to the programming.

The new aircraft are the B-25H Mitchell and two variants of the Bf109, the F4 and G6. The Mitchell twin-engine bomber packs a 75mm cannon in the nose, and can be loaded out with different weapons packages. The Bf109F4 "Franz" is generally acknowledged as the best dogfighting 109, and the G6 was designed to destroy bombers with a 30mm cannon and two 13mm machine guns. All three airplanes are great additions to the *Warbirds* fleet of 16 aircraft.

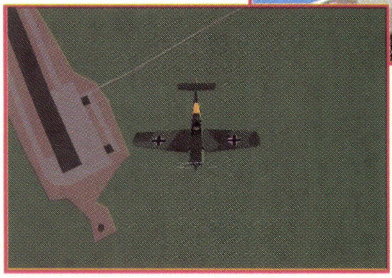
The new ".ord" command allows a choice of historically accurate weapons loadouts for most aircraft. Details on loads are in the README2 file in the *Warbirds* download. Now you can tailor your payload to the intended mission; there are usually different combinations of bombs and/or rockets possible. This is a significant improvement, and has a big effect on play. Capturing airfields from the enemy is becoming a science, with cooperating squadrons selecting and loading aircraft for specific tasks in the assault.



▲ **If you expect to live very long you better find a good wingman. Huff, of Pain Squad, is excellent**

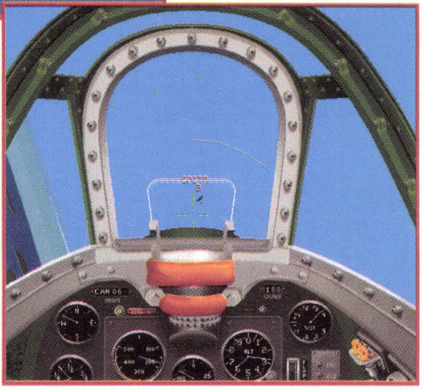
It's tougher to be enthusiastic about the changes to the flight model. Apparently there were player complaints about stalls and spins. The model was altered to give a more progressive stall with "improved" post stall and spin characteristics. Theoretically, the new control feel in these flight regimes would make it easier to recognize the approaching stall and prevent a spin. The model now seems too forgiving. It takes ham-handed yanking and stomping on the controls to enter a fully developed spin. Recovery is usually quick and easy, with a momentary release of the controls followed by smooth, proper rudder and elevator inputs. This new model is still considerably better than the program's only competitor in on-line air combat. It appears to be a concession to playability over realism, however.

▼ **When the fight went vertical, this P-38 suddenly realized he didn't have enough energy to complete his move. Too bad!**

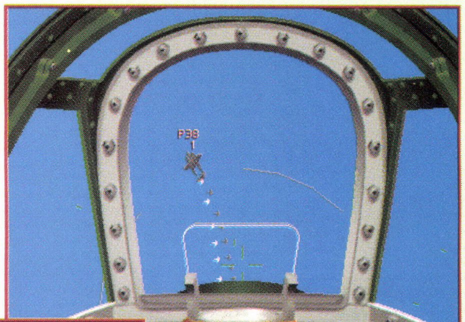


Play has been altered by removing all but one of the roving carrier task forces from the arena. It starts out neutral, but can be captured with determined effort. Taking the carrier is no longer a victory condition. If a country owns the boat but loses all land bases, the war is over. Ground objects, such as hangars, ships and ack can now be destroyed by strafing, but it takes a bunch of accurate shooting to do so. Field capture requirements have also been altered. All buildings, the radio mast and all the acks must now be taken out, and a player must then land. Capture is not complete until the field re-opens, so enemy players must be prevented from landing for a short while.

▼ **While the Spit is not the wonder-plane it was in Air Warrior, you'll still meet many of them in combat**



Programming improvements simplified terrain and adjusted the graphics code to increase framerate. A framerate counter, <ALT-P>, will toggle a display in the upper left corner to monitor video performance. Multiple terrain is now supported, allowing different terrain in various arenas. The host computer now remembers your last fuel, ordnance and gunnery convergence settings for each plane you fly; a really nice touch.



▲ **In the Historical Arena there are no icons to point out the enemy. This FW-190's camo paint becomes a true tactical advantage here on both offense and defense**

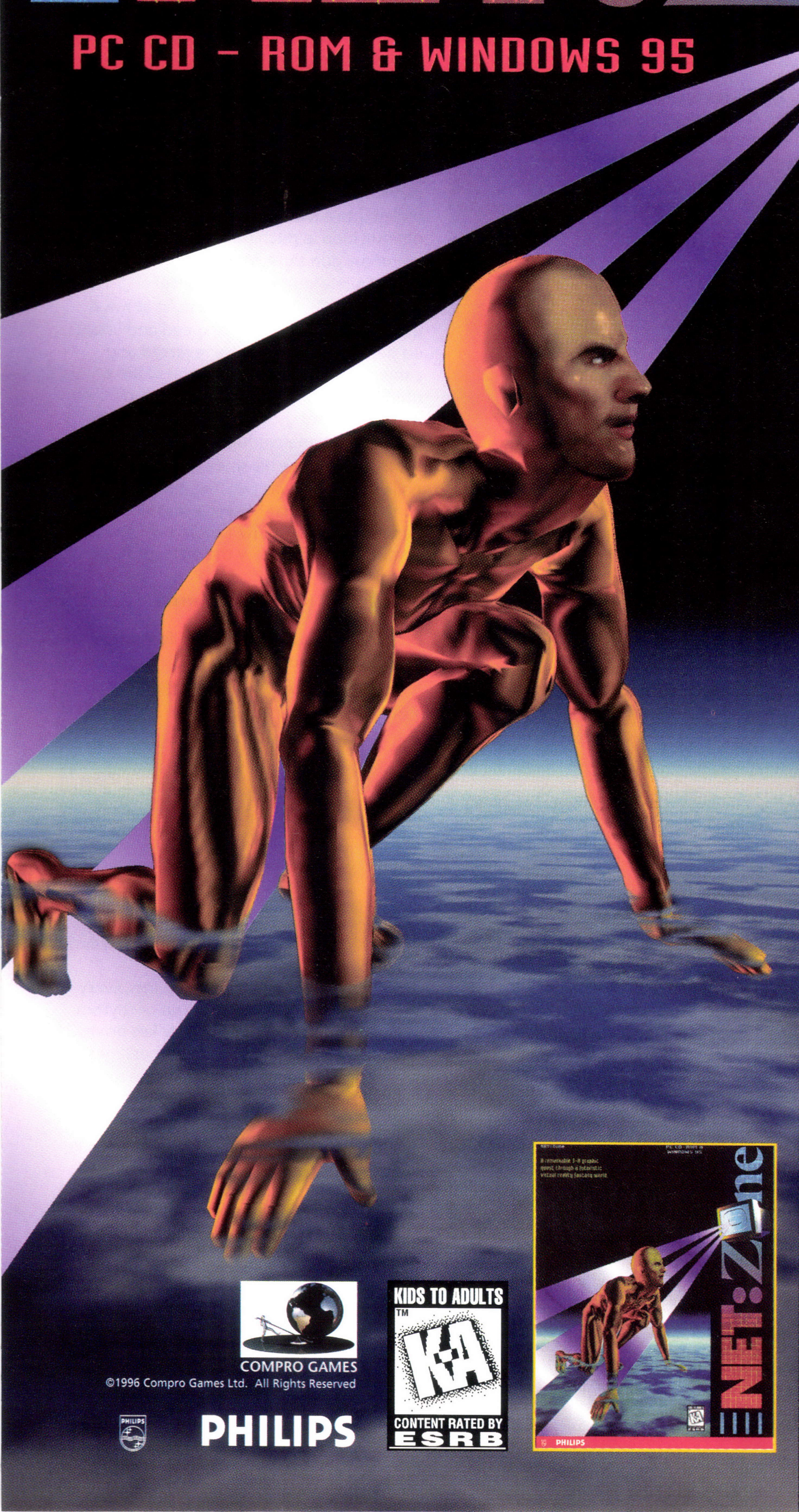
ICI has added a "Historical Arena" to the menu choices as well. This new arena is currently open only on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday nights. Instead of four countries, there are only two. Aircraft types are divided by historical alliance. You won't find Mustangs dueling Mustangs here. The glowing neon icons which give range and aircraft type in the main arena have been radically changed. You will con a friendly at 2500 yards, but will have to close to 100 yards to see an enemy icon. Only callsigns are displayed; you'll have to determine aircraft type with the Mark 1 eyeball. The current theme is "Defense of the Reich," with Axis versus Allied aircraft slugging it out over the Mediterranean terrain. This arena is a blast; it's more interesting, challenging and realistic.

ICI already has plans for further *Warbirds* enhancements. The next aircraft is slated to be the Ki-84 Frank, a Japanese fighter. Release 1.10, tentatively scheduled for late December, will include the ability to man the gun positions in multi-crew aircraft. About the same time, look for a Head-To-Head version of the game which will allow two-player connection via modem, network or TCP/IP. Head-To-Head capability will undoubtedly lead to a dueling ladder competition. Further down the road, there are plans for a film viewer to allow you to critique your missions. Look for that in the first quarter of '97.

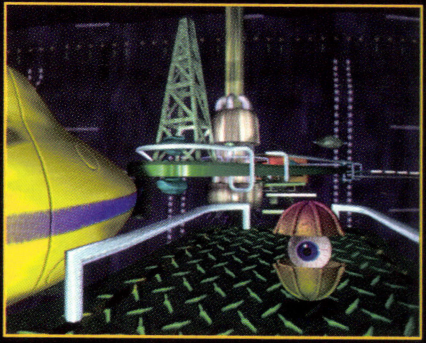
Get all the details at **www.icigames.com**. *–john nolan*

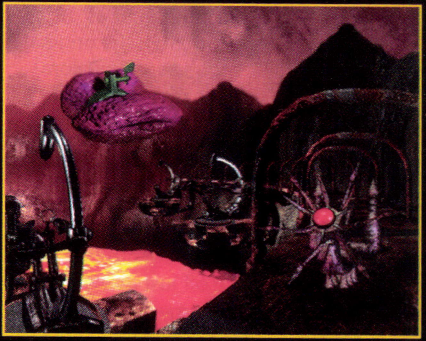
NET:Zone

PC CD - ROM & WINDOWS 95



A CyberJunkie's Ultimate Fantasy Come True....





Cross the boundary that separates dreams from reality. Enter the virtual world of Net: Zone, an adventure game with a world full of bizarre computer programs, artificial life forms, and floating platforms. Discover the CYCORP virtual reality interface linking you to the cyberspace world of the Genecys Zone. Attach the neural device to your head, and let your mind interface directly with the Zone....the secrets of CYCORP and the mystery of your father's disappearance are waiting...

To order, interface with your local retailer or call 1-800-883-3767

WebSite: http://www.philipsmedia.com

©1996 Gametek, Inc. All Rights Reserved

COMPRO GAMES

©1996 Compro Games Ltd. All Rights Reserved

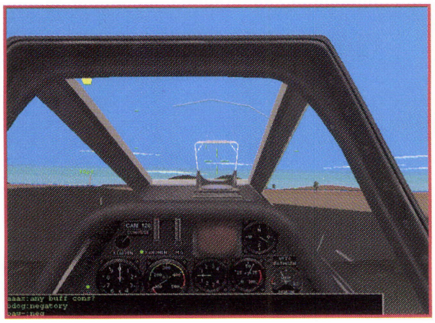
PHILIPS

KIDS TO ADULTS
TM
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

living history online

fighting the real tuskegee airmen in warbirds

I rushed to my computer room and turned the computer on. Good, just enough time to get into the last event for the evening. Tonight, for the first time in my life, I was going to test my flying skills against a *real* WWII fighter squadron, with *real* WWII fighter pilots in real time, who were going to try to shoot me down. They were the famous elite Tuskegee airmen, seen on HBO. At least one of them was a real-life ace. Yeow.



aaax:any buff cons?
bdog:negatory

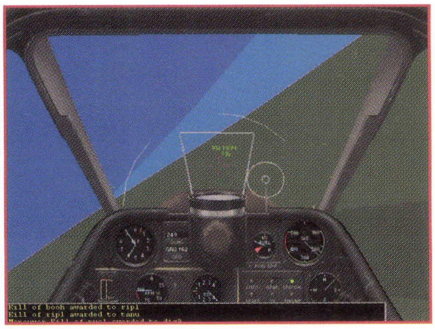
◀ **The Tuskegee squadron must be near**

This fantastic special event happened on-line this August. ICI and a company called The Other Side (TOS) took on-line flight simulation to a new level of realism with this special event, with ICI's *Warbirds* air combat flight simulator. One hundred on-line players flew in the special events arena, which was set up with actual Mediterranean and North African airfield locations. I was flying for the German side against this famous squadron. Players fought in the original actual squadrons, with squadron commanders and flight leaders leading.

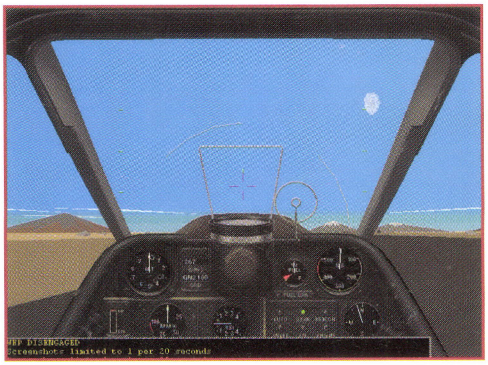
My heart pounded as my Fw190A-4 roared to life. The "Tuskegee boys" were approaching my Greek airfield flying escort for B-17 Bombers in their deadly red-tailed P-51D Mustangs…

Since I was late, the organizer allowed me to take off just as my squadron mates appeared over my airfield, many smoking, from an anti-bomber mission. I took off among the virtual olive trees and snow covered mountains. Enemy aircraft were reported over my airfield. I reached 5,000 feet. Suddenly, my heart almost stopped. *Real-life* World War Two fighter pilots in red tailed P-51s suddenly appeared above me. One was way in front of the others. He flamed a nearby squadron mate of mine, then came firing at me. He was a good shot. I heard some thumps as he found his mark. Just before he passed, I flung my maneuverable FW into a wrenching climb and rolled so my wings kept perpendicular to him (called turning in the vertical). He turned as well, and tried to raise his nose to me. Too late. I hosed him with my powerful cannon, and saw him explode into a fiery ball; that was one. I had no time to think about it, as three more Mustangs were on my tail, firing. I heard more hits. I threw the FW into rapid S turns and reduced throttle to zero. Then I lowered the flaps. They were gaining rapidly.

▼ **Tuskegee airmen's view of a German FW-190**



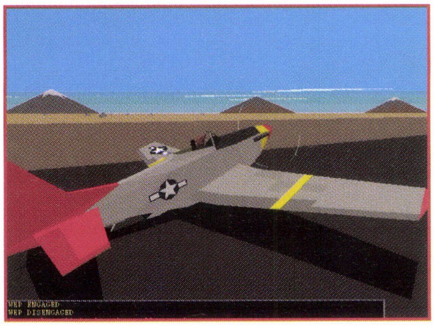
Kill of booh awarded to ripl
Kill of ripl awarded to tanu



WEP DISENGAGED
Screenshots limited to 1 per 20 seconds

◀ **The beautiful North African terrain**

Two threw up their noses and left. Another slid over me like a writhing snake and suddenly filled my whole wind screen. He overshot me. He was helpless and out of options. I tried to fire, but my nose jerked violently in response to small stick movements at this low speed, so I got only glancing shots. He shoved his nose down and departed. I climbed to get away from this angry hornet's nest of red-tailed Mustangs. After I had altitude, I returned, looking for revenge. Mustangs and FWs were now fighting all over the airfield. I had the altitude advantage. I picked a turning Mustang as a target. He pulled into a fake split "S" and went into an oblique loop (a pitch back) neatly, and pulled out of my gun sight. Man, who was this guy? He definitely kept me off balance!

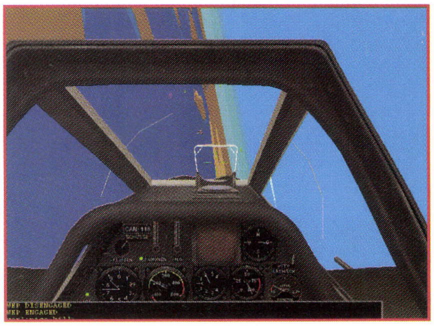


WEP ENGAGED
WEP DISENGAGED

◀ **Notice the authentic Tuskegee colors**

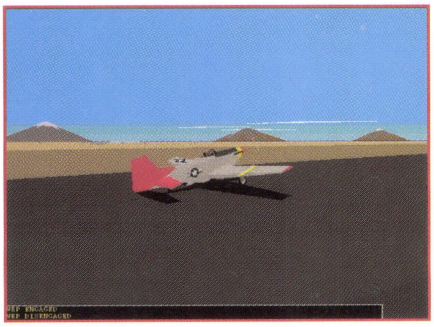
Suddenly, he was coming right at me. A quick loop at minimum airspeed and I started getting hits on him. He reversed and came at me again, firing his guns. I did a quick split "S" and got some more strikes on him. He started gushing black smoke. After more hard maneuvering a white parachute blossomed above his smoking airplane. He bailed out. That was two. This time I realized by the kill sign that he was a real-life Tuskegee airman. Wow. I could tell he was something different by the efficient flying he did, compared to most on-line pilots. Every move was exact, and put me out of rhythm. Now I heard the pounding of strikes on my own airplane, and a flurry of hit messages. My rear fuselage separated from the remains of my plane... and I bailed out. A P-38 circled away in triumph as I drifted slowly to the ground. I made the classic error of not checking my "six" or rear. Wow; what a rush! It was the most exciting computer flying I had ever done. How realistic was this event, in the opinions of the actual World War Two fighter pilots involved? The Tuskegee airmen said afterward that without hesitation, it was *"very realistic."*

▼ **Yeowee. That could be a real life fighter pilot flying that Mustang**



WEP DISENGAGED
WEP ENGAGED

One of the Tuskegee airmen taking off ▶



WEP ENGAGED
WEP DISENGAGED

Later, I reflected back. Through the magic of this special event, I had gotten as close to being a WWII fighter pilot as I will probably ever get in my life time. You can, too. Check out ICI's FTP internet address at **icigames.com**. *–richard ordway*

The Ultimate War Game!

Muzzle Velocity combines state-of-the-art battle strategy with spectacular real-time, "in-the-trenches" 3-D combat action.

It's awesome! Get ready to experience the most realistic World War II simulation ever developed.

This is not another war strategy game that locks you into a basic overhead view. Not by a long-shot.

Muzzle Velocity puts you *in the middle of the action* in a real-time interactive 3D environment complete with texture mapping and spectacular 32-channel digital sound.

The gameplay is phenomenal. You can wage ferocious individual battles or begin a "career" that takes you through the entire campaign.

BOTH STRATEGY AND ACTION!

From the "satellite" view, you can command a single platoon or an entire battalion from an Allied or Axis nation (your choice).

You'll have complete control over battle strategy and tactics, artillery, inventory...everything.

And, at any time, you can leave the safety of your command post and find yourself on the front lines in a tank, vehicle or as a foot soldier.

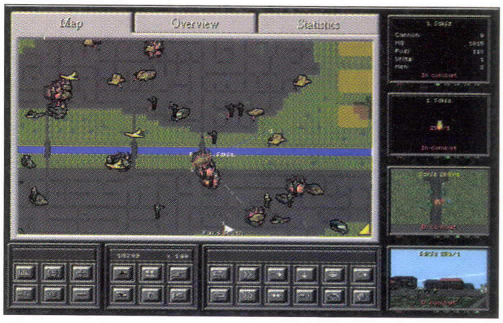
You'll see and participate in monumental tank battles. You'll take part in fierce ground assaults. And, you'll have intense face-to-face combat action in cities, fields and forests in both good and bad weather.

Or you can set the game on automatic and relax as the battle rages around you. Muzzle Velocity is fun to play and easy to use. And, with special training missions and on-line help you'll see action immediately.

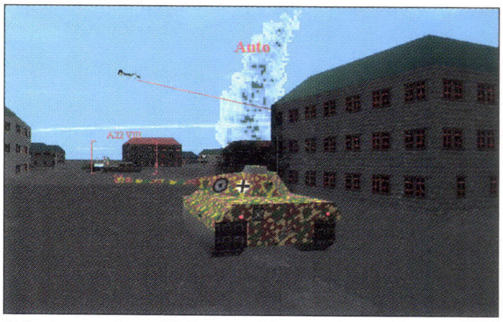
TRY MUZZLE VELOCITY YOURSELF

Go ahead. Try the Muzzle Velocity DEMO on the demo disk that came with this magazine. Or call 1-800-551-0100 (970-872-8756 outside the US) with your VISA or MasterCard and get the full version with over 140 missions for just **$44^{95}** (\$4^{95} S&H).

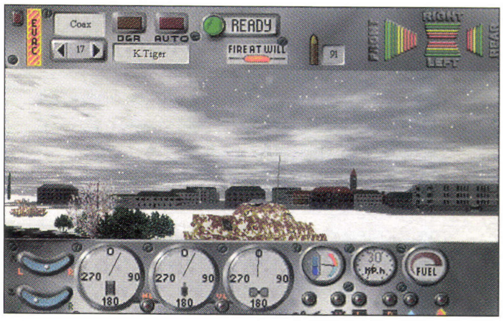
Either way, you'll experience a higher level of wargame action than you ever dreamed possible.



Command your troops from the detailed satellite view. Or leap into the most intense real-time 3-D war action you've ever seen in a strategy wargame.



Select a tank, vehicle or soldier and you'll instantly find yourself on the battlefield. The action is so real you'll swear you hear bullets whizzing by your ear.



The graphics are absolutely first rate. And, with over 140 different missions, you'll have hundreds of hours of exciting and challenging game play.

ON ENCLOSED CD-ROM!!!

MUZZLE VELOCITY

System Requirements: Pentium 75MHz or faster, 12MB RAM, SVGA Graphics, 15MB free hard disk space, 2x CD-ROM drive, mouse, supports most major sound cards.

Designer: Digi4Fun, Inc.

Publisher: CodeFusion, Inc.
1118 W. Magnolia
Suite 320
Burbank, CA 91506

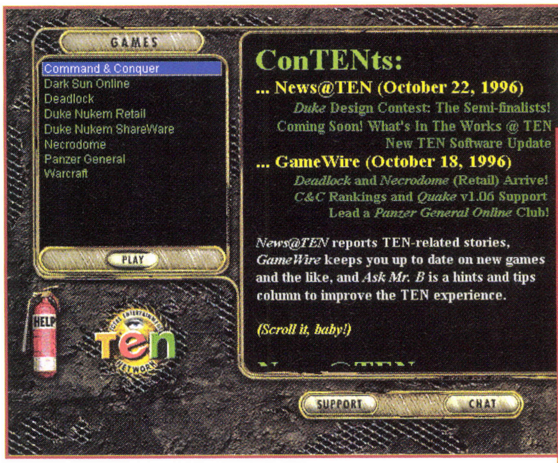
Download the DEMO:
http://www.digi4fun.com
major on-line services

© 1996 Freitag Marketing Services

panzer general online

the wargame of choice for many goes multi-player

While the hardcore *"grognard"* wargamers may quibble over its historical merits, there is no denying the fact that SSI's *Panzer General* is one of the most popular–if not *the* most popular–wargame ever. Easy to learn but challenging to play, one major complaint has been a lack of multi-player options. That has now been solved with the release of *Panzer General Online*, a version custom-designed for play over a gaming service (sorry, folks, no general Internet or Kali play in this version). As of this writing, the only service the game is available on is TEN (Total Entertainment Network); while early promotional material mentioned mPlayer, there's been no final word about implementation there.



ConTENts:

... News@TEN (October 22, 1996)

Duke Design Contest: The Semi-finalists!

Coming Soon! What's In The Works @ TEN

New TEN Software Update

... GameWire (October 18, 1996)

Deadlock and *Necrodome* (Retail) Arrive!

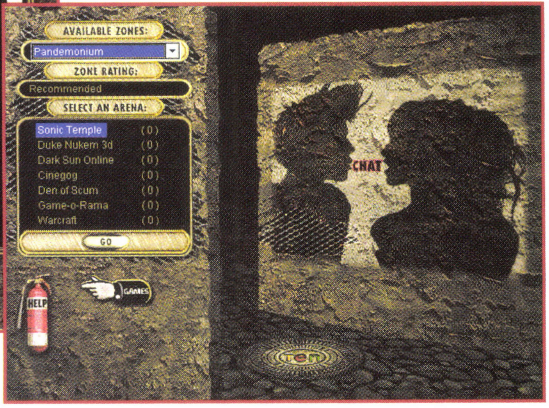
C&C Rankings and *Quake* v1.06 Support

Lead a *Panzer General Online* Club!

News@TEN reports TEN-related stories, *GameWire* keeps you up to date on new games and the like, and *Ask Mr. B* is a hints and tips column to improve the TEN experience.

(Scroll it, baby!)

◀ **TEN's interface is simple and easy to navigate**



▼ **Meet opponents in the (largely empty) TEN chat rooms**

With an online game such as this, the service it's operating through can have almost as much of an effect on gaming enjoyment as the game itself, and in this case TEN provides a mixed experience. The TEN software is easy to install, and the interface is clean and easy to navigate. Even updates to the TEN software (several of which happened in the few weeks this review took) are well done, automatically and in the background while you continue to cruise the TEN zones. Unfortunately, problems still exist. TEN wasn't always available, and sometimes it dropped my connection, even though the game session was running from a direct connection to the Internet (a connection TEN said was "good"). Such dropouts are irritating, especially as *Panzer General Online* doesn't allow saved games and because TEN didn't always allow an immediate reconnection. Opponent availability problems exist as well; online services promise ready availability of opponents, but the *Panzer General Online* area was often empty (in fact, one Sunday afternoon check showed no more than 100-200 people on TEN, most of them in the *Duke Nukem* and *Quake* areas). Even a check on a Thursday evening–*Panzer General Online* meeting time–showed only 16 generals gathered for play.

Panzer General Online itself is pretty much pure *Panzer General,* with some unique add-ons for multiplayer and without the campaign mode. The game is full-screen Windows 95; it looks and plays like the DOS version, but runs a tad slowly on a P60. According to the install documentation, it requires DirectX 2–nothing earlier *nor* nothing later. With many games coming out with DirectX 3 already, this implies a need to reinstall versions of DirectX for different games–completely unacceptable.

The game features some 15 scenarios, with options in some for up to eight players per scenario (with more than two, the forces involved are split between different "commanders"). Scenarios range from six to about thirty turns long, all reasonable lengths for single-session on-line play (although a save game option should have been included). There is now an adjustable option for breaking a turn into phases, where players get to move a subset of their forces; there can even be a time limit put to these phases. This both speeds up multiplayer sessions and gives the game a much more fluid feel; not quite as frantic as real time, but close. One can only hope that this is implemented in future *General* games.

Overall, *Panzer General Online* is certainly a decent addition to the *General* series. The unique phase options in the game means that, as a game, it actually surpasses its single-player incarnation, but difficulties with TEN, a lack of save game options, the DirectX issue, and a dearth of "readily available" on-line opponents combine to reduce the impact of the game as compared to other on-line entertainment options. *–scott udell*

dark sun online

Role-playing in TSR's grimmest world

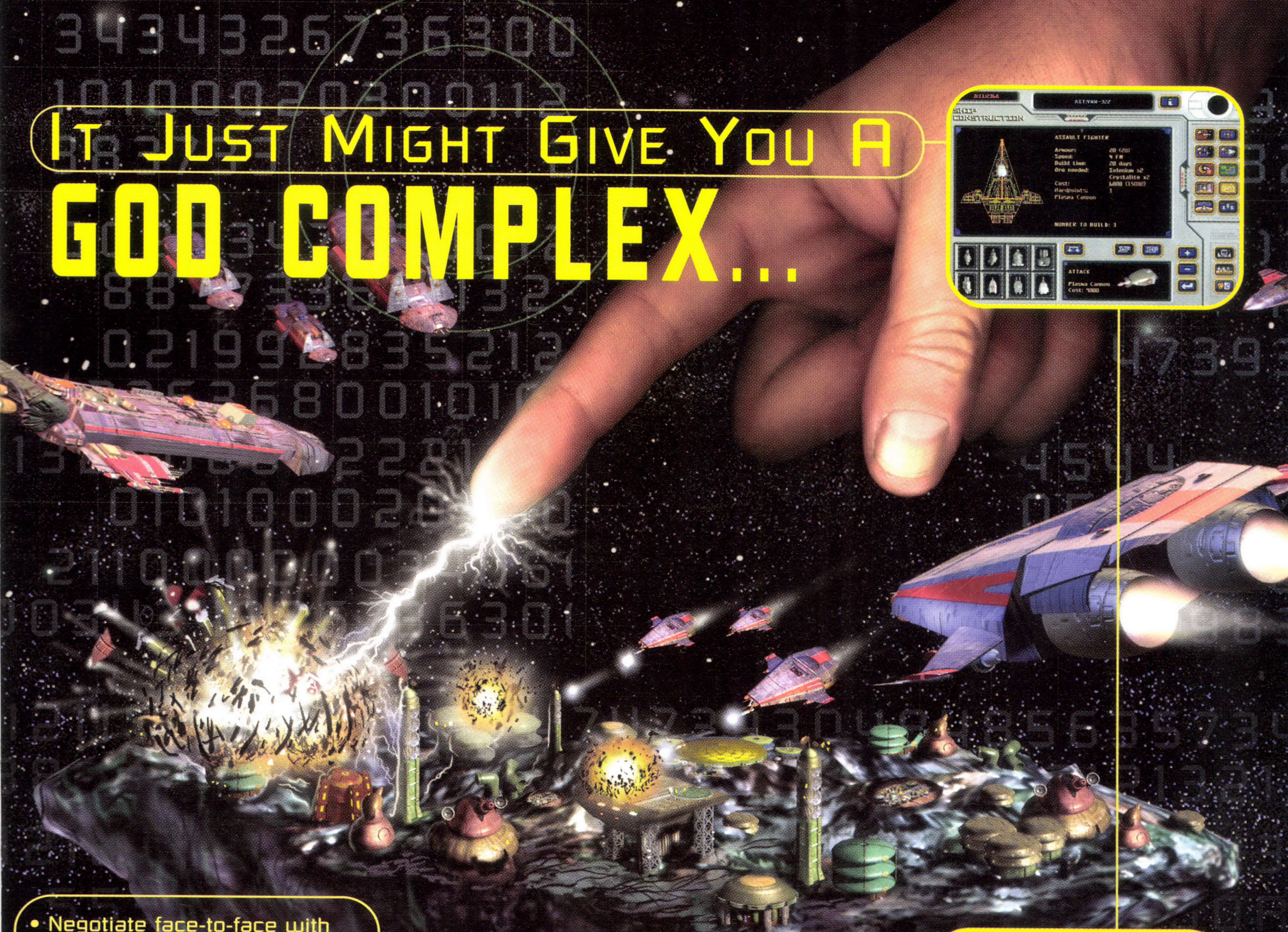
It's a rule of thumb that every serious pay-per-play gaming network needs at least one role-playing game. Undoubtedly realizing this, TEN (the Total Entertainment Network) offers its members *Dark Sun Online*, a top-down, multi-player role-playing environment set in TSR's grimmest and moodiest game world.

Dark Sun Online is, not surprisingly, based on previous *Dark Sun*™ titles by SSI: the same isometric view, simple combat and sluggish movement is present here, the principal difference being the hundreds of other players who stalk the game world alongside you.

With its hundreds of players, *Dark Sun Online* is a lot like the Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs) you'll find everywhere on the Internet, but with one key difference: graphics. Of course, those graphics are as much a liability as an asset. The world is displayed in outdated, chunky VGA, which makes it difficult to figure out what's going on around you, both because of the blocky characters and because of your inability to see very far in any direction. This, combined with an overall lack of game speed, makes the game as hard for beginners to jump into as the typical text-based MUD.

Most of the things you'd expect from a MUD are present here: lots of conversation options, a big city to start the game in, multiple dungeon areas for the purposes of stat building, and so forth. The only problem is that none of it seems very novel or inspired, though fans of the *Dark Sun* world will undoubtedly beg to differ with this assessment.

All things considered, *Dark Sun Online* doesn't bring anything new to the on-line table. The game world is potentially interesting, and the multi-player element is indeed present, but sluggish response time, a middling to poor game engine and an overall lack of novelty leave the game trailing behind *Ultima Online* and *Meridian 59*, two on-line competitors with a different focus and better execution. *–joe grant bell*


IT JUST MIGHT GIVE YOU A
GOD COMPLEX...

8:11:2368
AST:VNN-322
SHIP CONSTRUCTION

ASSAULT FIGHTER

Armour: 20 (20)
Speed: 4 FN
Build time: 20 days
Ore needed: Selenium x2
Crystalite x2
Cost: 6000 (15000)
Hardpoints: 1
Plasma Cannon

NUMBER TO BUILD: 3

ATTACK
Plasma Cannon
Cost: 9000

- Negotiate face-to-face with alien species in stunning 3D motion-captured video and digitized speech.
- Encounter 6 diverse alien cultures in a randomly generated universe.
- Research and develop an incredible array of spacecraft, weaponry, mining techniques, and intelligence systems.
- Compete with up to 8 human players via network or modem.
- Define your gaming experience with custom options including game length, universe size, alien hostility, and micro or macro management style.

Fragile Allegiance gives you ultimate control and power in building a galactic empire. Managing every detail – from providing a stable atmosphere to securing adequate power, and constructing a profitable mining operation – will require impressive resource skills. Whether you build alliances, stay neutral, or go to war, you must keep everything under control. Your control.

FRAGILE ALLEGIANCE

FRAGILE ALLEGIANCE™

Developed By
Gremlin
INTERACTIVE

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
AGES 6+

Interplay™
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™
www.interplay.com

Available on PC CD-ROM

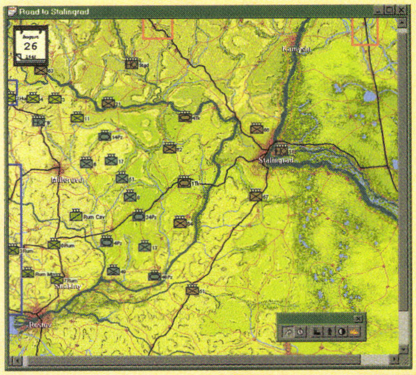
© 1996 Gremlin Interactive, Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Interplay and Fragile Allegiance are trademarks of Interplay Productions. All Rights Reserved. Interplay is the sole publisher and distributor. Licensed from and developed by Gremlin Interactive, Ltd.

by Scott Udell

Command Post

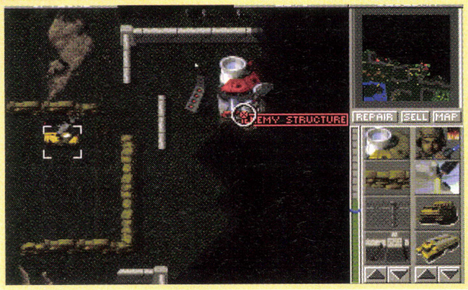
Wargame? Strategy game? What's the difference?

Actually, the title for this month's Command Post could just as easily have been "*Panzer General*: strategy game or wargame?" It's a subject which has resulted in some sharp debate here at *CGS+*, with yours truly taking the role of the grumpy old *grognard*, arguing that, at best, *Panzer General* is a strategy game with a historical wrapper. Defending my position has been difficult, however, because there really is no right answer. Actually, as I've looked further into the subject I've found there's a huge range of opinion, and that's only within our office and the environs of the new *CG Online* wargame and strategy game forums (check 'em out at **www.cdmag.com /forum /forum.html**; they're like the Usenet newsgroups, but smaller and cozier and–at least for now–generally more civil). Opinion is varied enough, and there are enough interesting approaches to the subject that I think I'm going to do some extended research in the community, and will present the results later; for now, however, I'll just babble on about *my* take on the question.



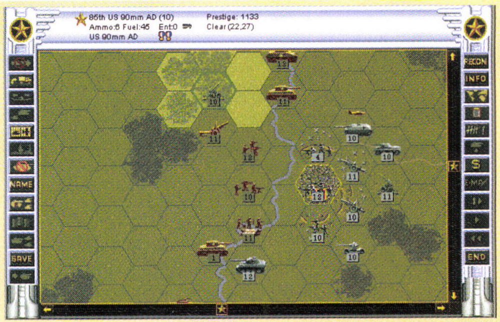
▲ Even games like Close Combat or the upcoming Road to Moscow (pictured), with their fairly detailed modeling, make compromises; the key, though, is that those compromises and simplifications still produce a somewhat "realistic" result

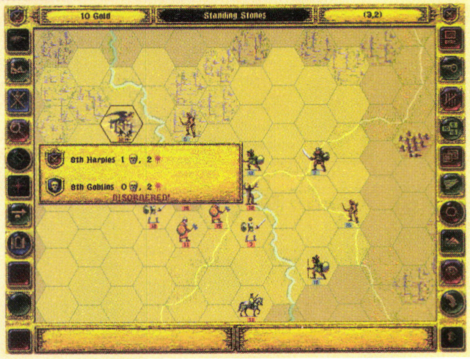
▼ Despite its combat focus, Command & Conquer is not a wargame; aside from its science fictional elements, the abstractions in its combat don't lead to real-world results and don't even try to



Strategy Central

Here at *CGS+* we tend to lump wargames in as a special subset of the larger category of strategy games, so perhaps it's best to define just what we mean by "strategy" games. Strategy, according to *Webster's II*, is "**1**. The science or art of military command as applied to the overall planning and conduct of large-scale combat operations. **2**. A plan of action resulting from the practice of strategy. **3**. The art or skill of using stratagems esp. in politics and business." Of those three, a modification of number one is perhaps best used for describing strategy games: a game which uses the science or art of command or management as applied to the overall planning and conduct of large-scale operations, be they combat, business, diplomacy, etc. Well, okay, maybe "large-scale" is a bit of a misnomer, because we tend to include games small in scope but high in detail (*Civilization* may be an example of one kind of large scale–it portrays a world–and *Free Enterprise* is another; it portrays a single business in some detail). For convenience's sake, we tend to lump in such "traditional" games as chess, puzzle, and card games into our strategy section; in part, because some (like chess) really do fit, and also because in other cases (especially puzzle games) we really don't have any other place to put them.





▲ Panzer General and Allied General (pictured) were two games that just didn't cut it as wargames for me…
▶ …instead, the engine made much more sense in a "strategy game" setting like Fantasy General

Realism is something which doesn't really play a part in considering a strategy game; it can be a realistic depiction of actual world events, or it can be completely made up. This can either be in the setting for the game (fantasy, sci-fi, historical, etc.) or in the game engine and mechanics (*e.g.*, producing new units in *C&C*). For the subset of strategy games we call wargames, however, "realism" of some sort is important.

Sometimes, of course, the *genre* lines get blurry even before we start to consider the issue of wargames. Many sports games, for example, require thinking strategically, especially if you play from the coaching mode (in fact, Steve Bauman has noted a surprising cross-over between wargamers and stat-based baseball gamers). Even more confusing can be the simulations; as they get more powerful, many are adding elements to their game engines which take you out of the cockpit or tank commander's seat and let you at least look at the bigger picture (if not control it directly). This is something Editor and sim-guy Steve Wartofsky has been talking about for months; as he pointed out a few "Hangars" back, the folks at DID are working on adding such a complete battle simulation to their flight sims that you need never fly a plane; you'll be able to get your total gaming experience as an AWACs controller or a Joint STARS operator. Because of this trend, expect to see some cross-over in the coming months between the sims and strategy sections of the magazine. Of course, then the question becomes: are these new sim components strategy gaming or wargaming? That gets me back to the topic in question.

What, then, is a wargame?

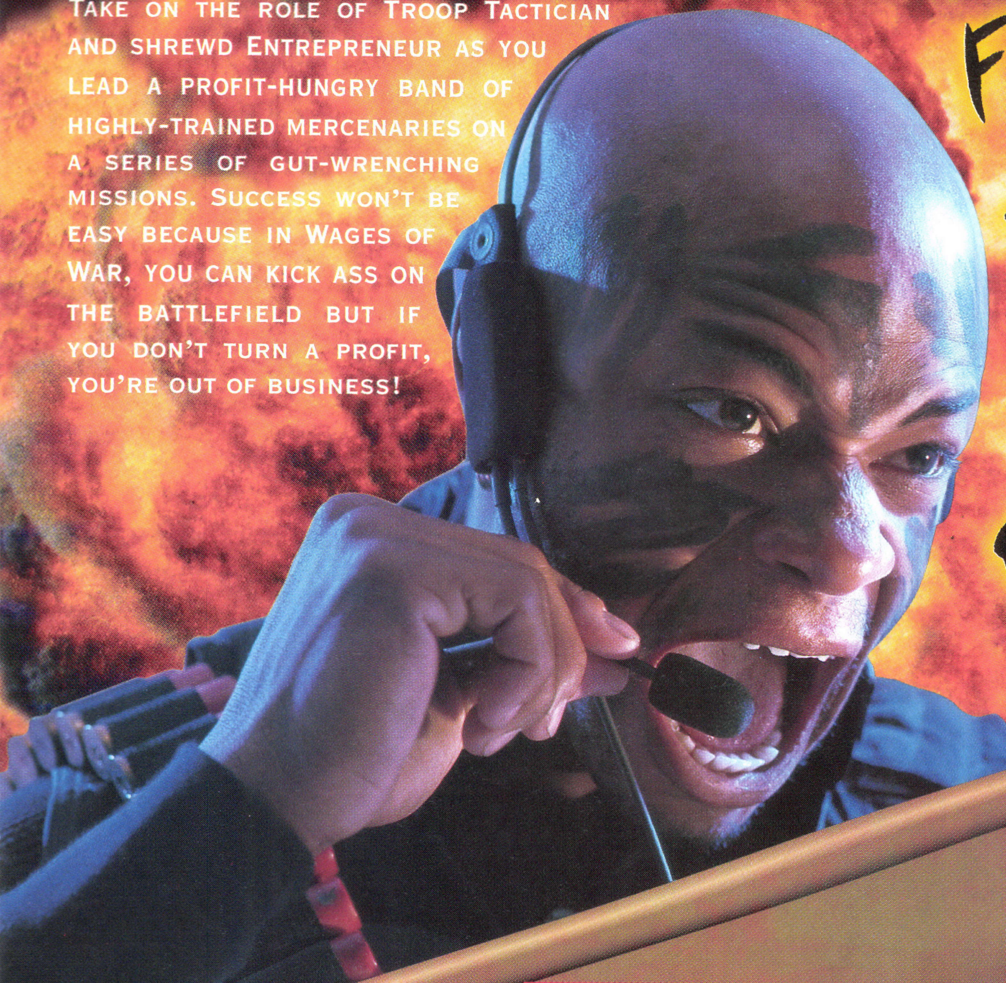
The simple definition of a wargame used by at least some here at *CGS+* is that it is any strategy game with a historical basis to it (while not explicitly stated to me, "battle recreation" as the major part of the game is implicit in the definition; otherwise, games like *Civ* and *Kingmaker* would be called wargames). To me, however, such a definition is too vague; using such a definition, games like the old *Battleship* boardgame would be a wargame, something most hard-

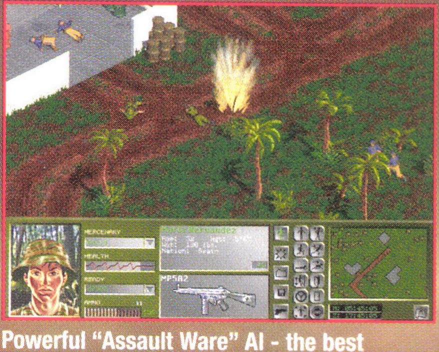
WAGES OF WAR™

NOW AVAILABLE

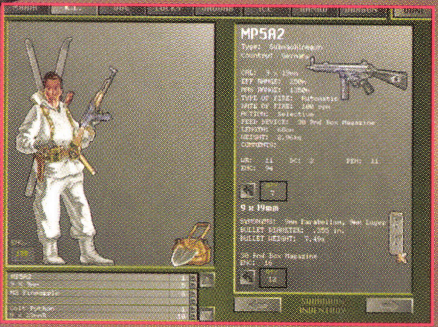
THE BUSINESS OF BATTLE

TAKE ON THE ROLE OF TROOP TACTICIAN AND SHREWD ENTREPRENEUR AS YOU LEAD A PROFIT-HUNGRY BAND OF HIGHLY-TRAINED MERCENARIES ON A SERIES OF GUT-WRENCHING MISSIONS. SUCCESS WON'T BE EASY BECAUSE IN WAGES OF WAR, YOU CAN KICK ASS ON THE BATTLEFIELD BUT IF YOU DON'T TURN A PROFIT, YOU'RE OUT OF BUSINESS!

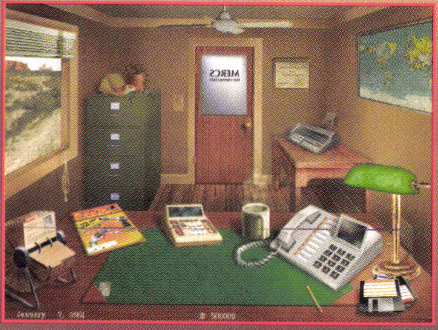

F@#* the Cost!! Get ME Backup!



- Powerful "Assault Ware" AI - the best turn-based combat system yet developed
- Super-realistic troop movement
- Hours of endless gameplay



- Over 50 unique mercenaries
- Over 40 deadly weapons
- Tons of accurately researched equipment



- High stakes business simulation
- Superb SVGA color

Available at your local retailer.
To order direct call: 1-800-251-9607
Outside U.S. call: 415-261-3227

NEW WORLD COMPUTING™

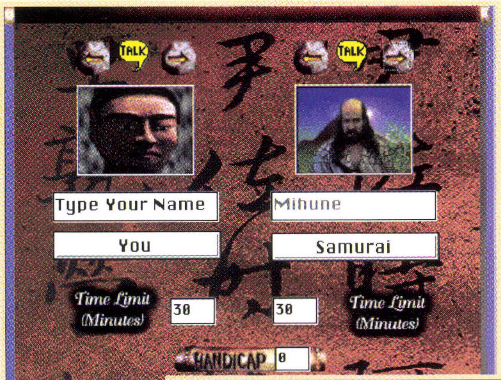
http://www.nwcomputing.com

STUDIO 3DO

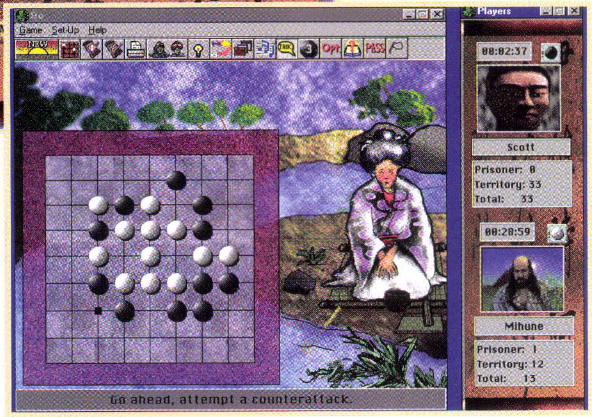
RANDOM GAMES

Designed for Microsoft® Windows® 95

New World Computing, Studio 3DO, the New World Computing and Studio 3DO logos, and Wages of War are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of The 3DO Company. © 1996 The 3DO Company. All rights reserved. All other trademarks belong to their respective holders. New World Computing is a division of The 3DO Company.



Type Your Name
Mihune
You
Samurai
Time Limit (Minutes) 30
30 Time Limit (Minutes)
HANDICAP 0



00:02:37
Scott
Prisoner: 0
Territory: 33
Total: 33

00:28:59
Mihune
Prisoner: 1
Territory: 12
Total: 13

Go ahead, attempt a counterattack.

▲ Choose your opponent in the Stone Master: Asia Edition

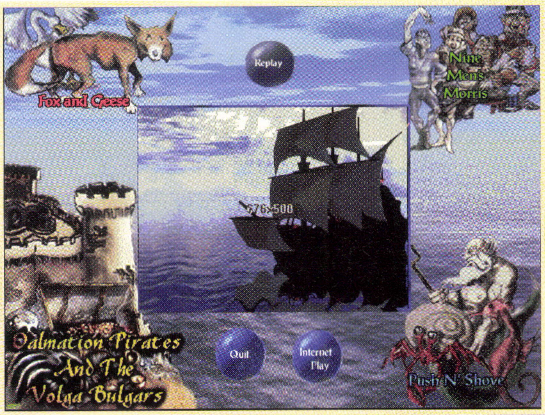
▶ A small board can make for a tight, fast game of Go

core wargamers would laugh at. When I think of just what a wargame is, I take into account two factors, "realism" and a related but less often considered concept, "consistency of scale."

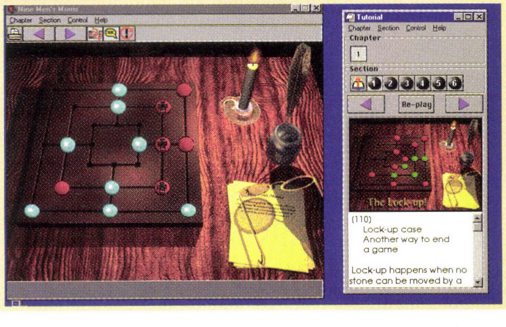
Realism is a phrase often used in evaluating a wargame; does the game "realistically" portray the battle or conflict? All wargames are an abstraction or simplification of the real world to some extent, so at some point *during play* their mechanics (be it in modeling of a tank's gunfire or in the scale of command) won't be "real." For me, realism is something to be evaluated at the end-point of a game or game element: did that front-on duel between a Sherman and a Tiger tank end plausibly, even if the modeling of the gunfire was based on a simple combat results table instead of complex fluid-flow dynamics and armor penetration calculations? Did the turn-based battle I just fought come to a reasonable conclusion, even if the method of play (you move/fire, I move/fire) was hardly "realistic"?

Often, realism and complexity or level of abstraction are confused. Some think for a wargame to be "realistic" it has to be complex, but that's not necessarily the case. A wargame can certainly be simple, but to be considered a "wargame" it should, in its simplicity, still strive to produce realistic results.

The issue of "consistency of scale" in a game is a concept I've not heard discussed before, but it's something which seems to me to be almost as important as realism. The concept is fuzzy, so some examples best illustrate the point. I don't classify *Panzer General* as a wargame because (aside from its sometimes wildly inaccurate combat results) the scales used in the game are vague and often changing; sometimes a map hex may seem like 40 kilometers, and others like ten. This might not be so bad, but your units morph from scenario to scenario as well; in one battle a unit may be most appropriately called a regiment, the next a corps, and then might later shrink back down to divisional size. Sure, in real-life units fluctuate because of combat losses and reinforcements, but never like they do in the game, and never to such a degree. Another example can be found in the real-time strategy games currently so popular; while their scales (of troops to vehicles, of movement, and especially of production) may be internally consistent and balanced to make a playable game, they certainly don't even try to tie these scales into what's "real." Enormous fun, of course, but not something you'd want to use as an example of "this is what it's really like" in the real world.



▲ Pick from one of four European "games-with-stones"



(110)
Lock-up case
Another way to end a game

Lock-up happens when no stone can be moved by a

▶ Nine Mens' Morris involves careful placement and movement and rapid changes in fortune

Fun's the only thing?

Some think that, when reviewing any game, even a wargame, the only thing which matters in the quality of the game is its fun factor, that considerations of realism (or "scale") should have no part in determining a reviewer's opinion. For most "hardcore" wargamers, however–or at least for this one–how well (how realistically, how accurately, whatever) the game portrays its situation (be it historical or current/near-future) is part of the fun; it's just not "fun" when you can't try *your* strategies/tactics out in a situation that's as close to what actually happened (or might happen) as possible.

Like I said at the start; all of the above is merely *my* approach to the issue (and what I use when doing a review). I'm going to go out to get the opinion of some "experts" in the industry; in the mean time, feel free to send us *your* opinion; after all, with no right answer, everyone's an expert! (write us here at the mag, or e-mail me at sudell@cdmag.com)

Enough soapboxing

After all that opining, I figured I'd better at least mention one new strategy package! Of course, one of the earliest strategy games is *Go*, the ancient classic of simple play yet complex strategy. I'm really not a fan of such ultra-abstract games, but for those of you who are, there's the new *Stone Master Series* from JC Research (606 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95112, **www.game-club.com**). The series will present various classic games-with-stones from around the world. Out now are the Asia Edition with *Go*, *Renju*, and *Gomoku;* and the Europe Edition, with *Nine Mens' Morris*, *Push & Shove*, *Dalmation Pirates and the Volga Bulgars*, and *Fox & Geese*; due out soon is the Africa-USA Edition, with *Mancala*, *Hex*, *Reversi*, "and others." Each Windows-based title is a very complete looking adaptation of the game, and all come loaded with gameplay features and options like tutorials, time clocks, animated (and vocal, if you wish) opponents, tips for play, even Internet capabilities. The voices of your opponents are generally hideous, and some of the video is weak, but the core gameplay features and background art seem very well done. Like I said, I'm not a fan of these kinds of games, so I can't really comment on the quality of the gameplay, but for those of you into shouting "Atari!" at your *Go* opponent, these may be just what you're looking for. ■

ROAD TO MOSCOW

WWII STRATEGIC OPERATIONS ON THE EASTERN FRONT 1941-1945

Take Command of the Entire German or Russian Army on the Eastern Front During WWII

On June 22, 1941, the German Army unleashed Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union, with almost 140 divisions, including 17 Panzer and 13 motorized units. Opposing the German onslaught were almost 170 divisions, including 32 armored units, of the massive Red Army. What happens next is up to you. Road to Moscow is a state-of-the-art simulation that will test your ability to lead either the German or Red Army to victory on the Eastern Front.

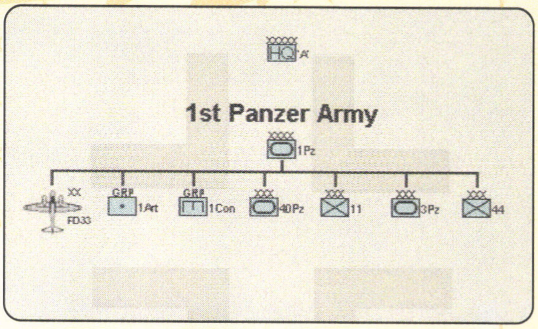


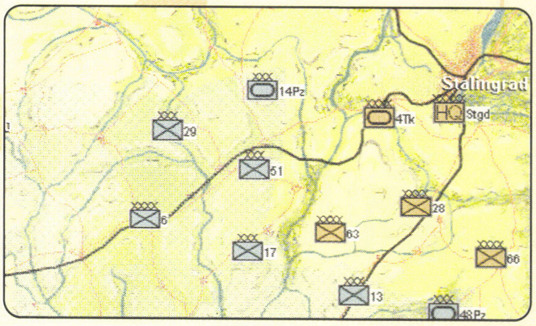
Table of Organization Browser showing 1st Panzer Army

HISTORICALLY ACCURATE ORDERS OF BATTLE

The German and Red Army Order of Battle features thousands of units from corps to company-size. An interactive Table of Organization Browser allows easy access to the historically accurate organization of every unit in the game.

HISTORICALLY ACCURATE BATTLEFIELD MAP

The Road to Moscow battlefield is an actual 1:2,000,000 scale, 256-color, topographical map of the Soviet Union and eastern Poland on June 22, 1941. This map shows over 20,000 historically accurate geographic locations. The scrollable campaign map is the equivalent of 18 full computer screens.



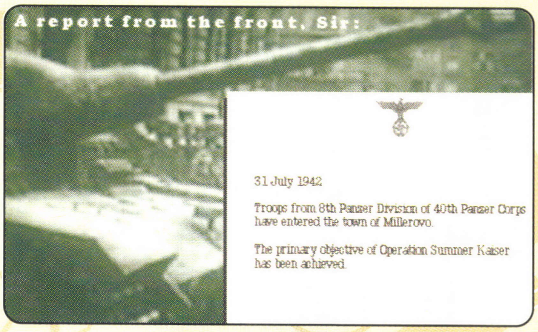
Actual terrain southwest of Stalingrad

HISTORICALLY ACCURATE OPERATIONAL PLANNING

Simply draw your operational plans directly on the game map. Your staff will move troops into position, stockpile supplies, allocate air strikes and artillery support. Watch the progress of your forces on the map and receive a variety of reports from the front as the fighting begins. Road to Moscow includes scenarios based on actual Eastern Front operations by both armies and a 1941-1945 campaign game.

OTHER EXITING FEATURES:

- Generals have individual personalities that affect the performance of the troops under their command.
- Operational plans include phase lines, deception, amphibious and airborne landings, commando raids, and partisan activity.
- An optional political feature that subjects the player's plans to the personal whims of Hitler or Stalin.
- Original CD-quality music and state-of-the-art sound effects.
- Easy-to-use point-and-click interface.



A report from the front, Sir:

31 July 1942

Troops from 8th Panzer Division of 40th Panzer Corps have entered the town of Millerovo.

The primary objective of Operation Summer Kaiser has been achieved.

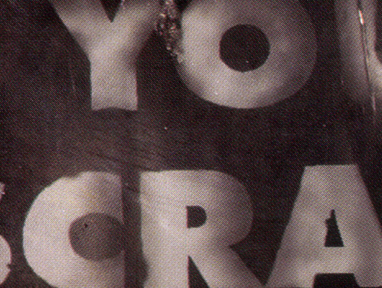
Report from 8th Panzer Division, 40th Panzer Corps

Playable Windows 95 Demo game at: http://www.arsenalpub.com

Arsenal Publishing

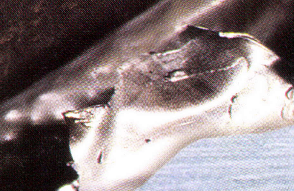
Software Copyright © 1996 Battlefield Design Group. Published by Arsenal Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Microsoft, Windows, and Windows 95 are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. IBM is a registered trademark of International Business Machines, Inc.

BLINK AND YOU'RE SCRAP METAL.

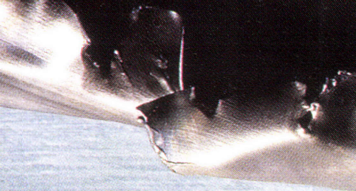


Eject from your HAWC, steal another. Bot-jacking is relatively legal here.

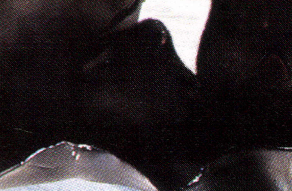
Wage war in everything from icy tundra to blistering desert. We suggest wearing layers.



Storm the enemy guard towers; try to avoid being turned into a red sinewy pile.



Destroy the enemy's HAWC delivery system and cut down on the number of missiles headed your way.

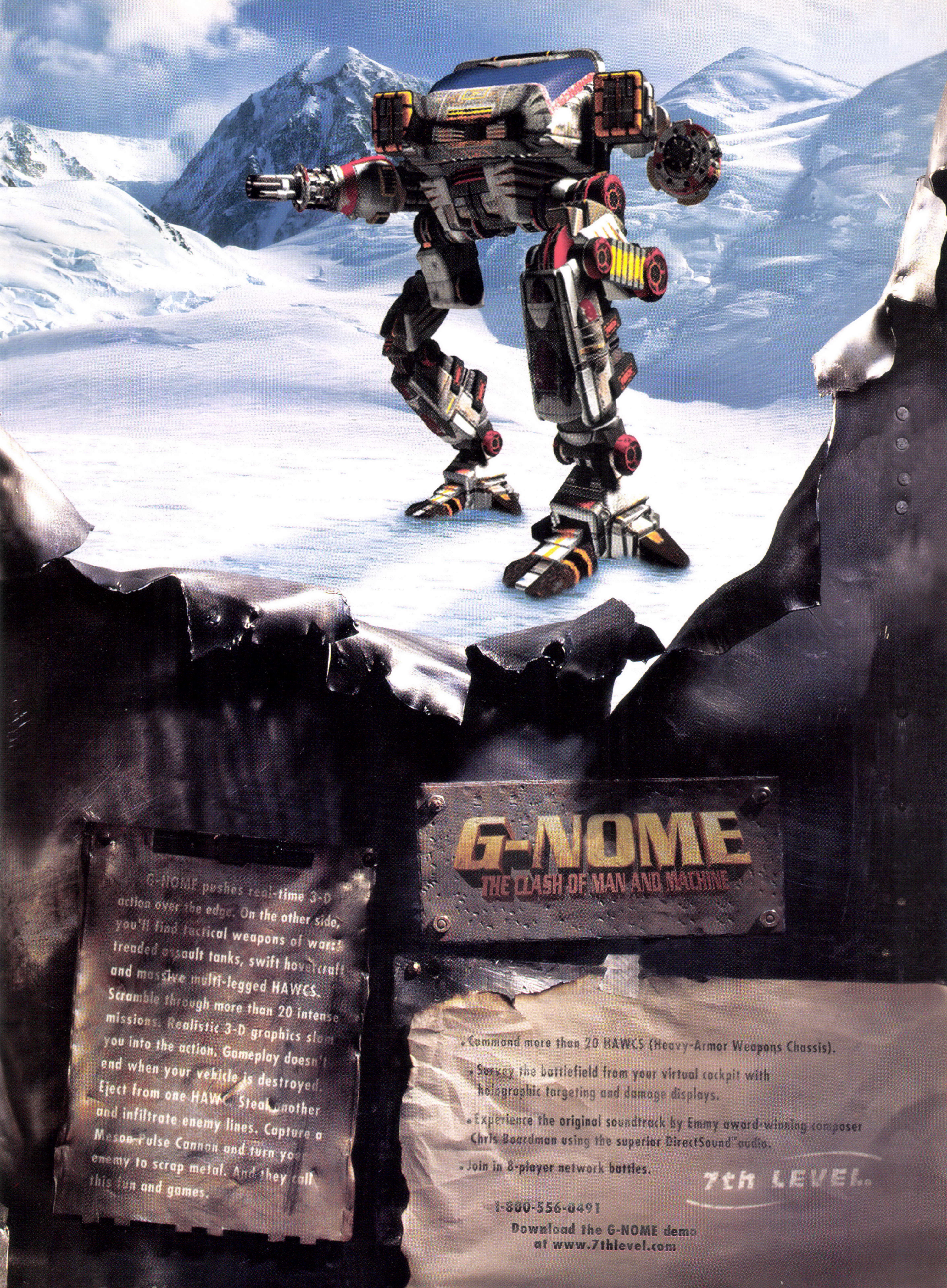


Communicate with wingmen via radio; share amusing anecdotes about global warfare.

ACTUAL SCREEN SHOTS

BestBuy • CompUSA • Computer City • Software Etc.

©1996 All rights reserved. All products are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective owners.



G-NOME

THE CLASH OF MAN AND MACHINE

G-NOME pushes real-time 3-D action over the edge. On the other side, you'll find tactical weapons of war: treaded assault tanks, swift hovercraft and massive multi-legged HAWCS. Scramble through more than 20 intense missions. Realistic 3-D graphics slam you into the action. Gameplay doesn't end when your vehicle is destroyed. Eject from one HAWC. Steal another and infiltrate enemy lines. Capture a Meson-Pulse Cannon and turn your enemy to scrap metal. And they call this fun and games.

- Command more than 20 HAWCS (Heavy-Armor Weapons Chassis).
- Survey the battlefield from your virtual cockpit with holographic targeting and damage displays.
- Experience the original soundtrack by Emmy award-winning composer Chris Boardman using the superior DirectSound™ audio.
- Join in 8-player network battles.

7th LEVEL

1-800-556-0491

Download the G-NOME demo
at www.7thlevel.com

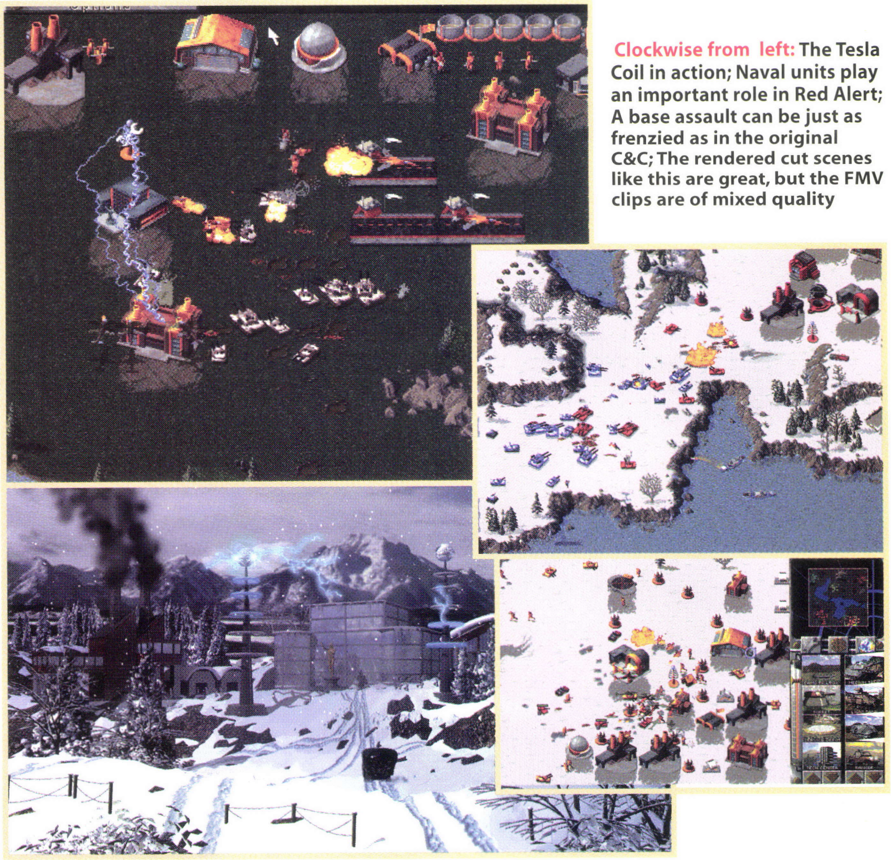
Fighting over the same ground?

Command & Conquer: Red Alert

Westwood Studios

DOS, Windows 95

★★★⯪☆



Clockwise from left: The Tesla Coil in action; Naval units play an important role in Red Alert; A base assault can be just as frenzied as in the original C&C; The rendered cut scenes like this are great, but the FMV clips are of mixed quality

Ah, Europe! One of the major strategic battlegrounds of the 20th Century. World War I and the Allies against the Germans and the Austro-Hungarian Empire… World War II and the Allies against the Soviets… what?! Hold on there–Soviets? Well, if you're playing *Command & Conquer: Red Alert* it is indeed the Soviets. A "prequel" to last year's hit *Command & Conquer*, *Red Alert* posits time-travel shenanigans which result in a world without Adolf Hitler, the Nazis, or the Third Reich, a world in which Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union (and someone who looks mysteriously like Kane, leader of the Brotherhood of Nod in *C&C*) as the chief threats to peace, security, and freedom throughout the lands. Despite the obvious historical changes, however, gamers will find that the battlefields of *Red Alert* remain *very* familiar; so familiar, in fact, as to seem basically *C&C* with new clothes.

On the surface, there is plenty which is new for *Red Alert*. Chief among the additions are the Windows 95 version and the SVGA mode, available *only* in the Windows 95 version (both come on the same disk). Basically doubling the vertical and horizontal resolution of the original, *Red Alert* in this mode still looks much nicer. Yes, objects are smaller and can be harder to grab (especially individual infantry units in a group), but the increased viewing area the new mode provides increases playability significantly (without a noticeable decrease in speed, at least on low-end Pentiums). Unfortunately, the special resolution used (640x400 instead of the more common 640x480) can cause problems for some users; some video cards apparently don't support this resolution, and so far *Red Alert* has been the only game that's required me to fiddle with my monitor controls. For players with these card problems, with older machines, or for those who don't wish to play in Windows 95 a DOS VGA version is available; while you'll sacrifice Internet play, SVGA, and the Map Editor, all other features of the game are included in the DOS version.

Internet play was heralded as a major feature provided by the Windows 95-based *Red Alert*; while it has been included, it seems strangely constrictive. There is no way to do direct machine-to-machine gaming; instead you must either go through a for-fee gaming service like TEN or Mplayer (neither of which supported *Red Alert* at release time, despite the inclusion of install software for each service) or via Westwood's free Westwood Chat service. Sure, you can both just agree to log on to Westwood Chat, but during testing this wasn't always possible. Admittedly, this was during *Red Alert*'s release week, so one could expect the system to experience load problems, but what happens as Westwood adds games to the service (which currently supports *Monopoly*, *C&C*, and *Red Alert*)? The chat areas themselves are the typically chaotic mixture of gamers; if you're willing to wade through the chaff you can probably find a decent opponent, but I prefer a less "noisy" setting for my gaming.

A number of tweaks and improvements have been made to the game system, but overall gameplay is identical to *C&C*. You'd expect that the wide variety of new units and buildings would lend the game a different feel, but they really don't; even the naval units seem to play like land units restricted to the watery portions of the map. Terrain is restricted to what you'd find in Western Europe, especially forests and snowy areas (although by press time I'd encountered an *indoor* scenario as well). Different terrain still provides just a different visual backdrop; there seem to be no terrain effects on movement or defense. A formation mode has been implemented, but because of the shape and style of the battlefields and the intensity of gameplay it's not as helpful as, say, a group of preset formations would have been. Of much more use is the unfortunately undocumented waypoint feature; select a unit or group and hold down Alt-Q while clicking on up to ten waypoints; when finished the unit(s) will move along the path you specific (*very* helpful when trying to avoid those Flame Towers or Tesla Coils, something the AI doesn't do well otherwise).

The AI has been improved in a few areas; specifically, it no longer stops at walls, instead often going after them with a vengeance (something you can use to help draw the AI units into range of your base defenses), and it will no longer leave a base totally defenseless when you assault its Ore Truck (the equivalent to the Tiberium Harvester in *C&C*). The AI also uses the "squish" assault method very well… too well, in fact, as it can easily send a multitude of vehicles after troops on foot at the same time, while you're hard-pressed to handle more than one vehicle at a time in this mission. In other areas, the AI remains incredibly dumb, often ignoring assaults happening a short distance away. Even your own units can be pretty stupid; true, you can set them in "guard" mode, but they can still be pretty idiotic when it comes to preserving their own skin (a "retreat when at X damage" mode would have been appreciated). In solo gaming, *Red Alert* makes up for these AI deficiencies much as the original did: by giving the computer faster production, more units at start-up, and (often) a more defensible position.

The included Map Editor is unfortunately undocumented (docs were supposed to be on the CD, but if they're there, they are *very* well hidden), but should appeal to those wishing to create their own challenges. It appears to be just a map editor instead of a more flexible scenario editor, although the lack of documentation keeps me from being absolutely certain of this. What is there doesn't seem terribly flexible, but is better than nothing or the shareware hacks which first appeared for *C&C*. A lack of a random scenario generator in the Map Editor is greatly offset by the new Skirmish mode hidden in the Multiplayer section of the game: this mode lets a single player take on up to seven computer players on a map of their choosing (complete with all the multiplayer settings), so even after the campaigns are finished, the maps which will surely flood the on-line world should provide solo players with plenty of new battlefields to fight across.

The biggest problem, though, is: will gamers want to continue to fight endlessly across more *C&C*-style battlefields? Die-hard fans of *C&C* certainly will, and for them *Red Alert* is an absolute must-have. For those of us, however, who enjoyed the first game but were looking for something fresh – more gameplay options, or at least *different* gameplay options – *Red Alert* is a bit of a disappointment; it's fun in the short run, but the same meal of fun repeated over and over loses its attraction. *–Scott Udell*

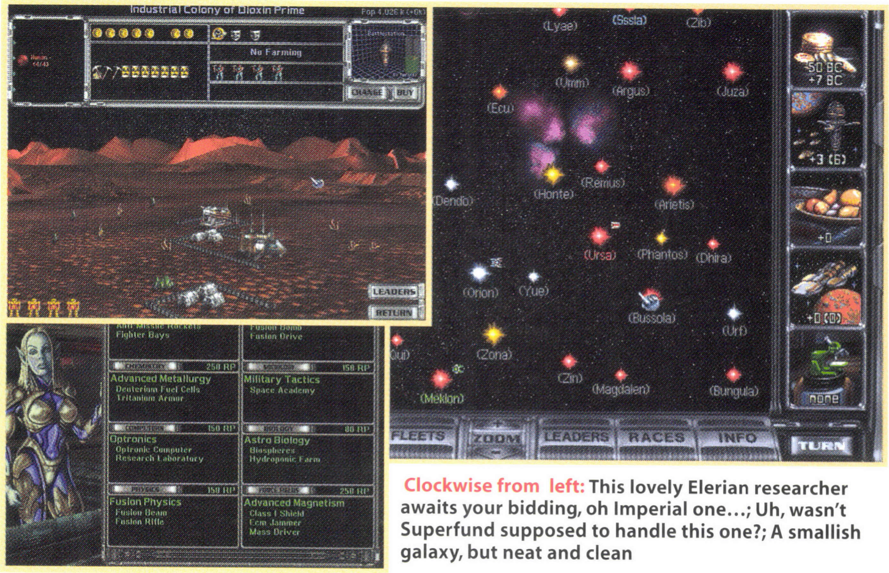
Good, but not a classic

Master of Orion II: Battle at Antares

MicroProse

DOS, Windows95

★★★½☆



Clockwise from left: **This lovely Elerian researcher awaits your bidding, oh Imperial one…; Uh, wasn't Superfund supposed to handle this one?; A smallish galaxy, but neat and clean**

A straight up space strategy game, *Master of Orion II: Battle at Antares* (MOO2) puts you in the role of the leader of a spacefaring race, bent on galactic domination. Like its predecessor, it gives you a choice of races, an expansive technology tree, and lots of opportunity for interstellar plunder and pillage. Also like the original, the game combines exploration, discovery, combat, and micromanagement into a blend of strategy gaming which has proven quite successful over the years. Unlike the first game, you share your galactic ambitions here with some of your friends; multiplayer capability finally makes its way into this part of the galaxy with this release.

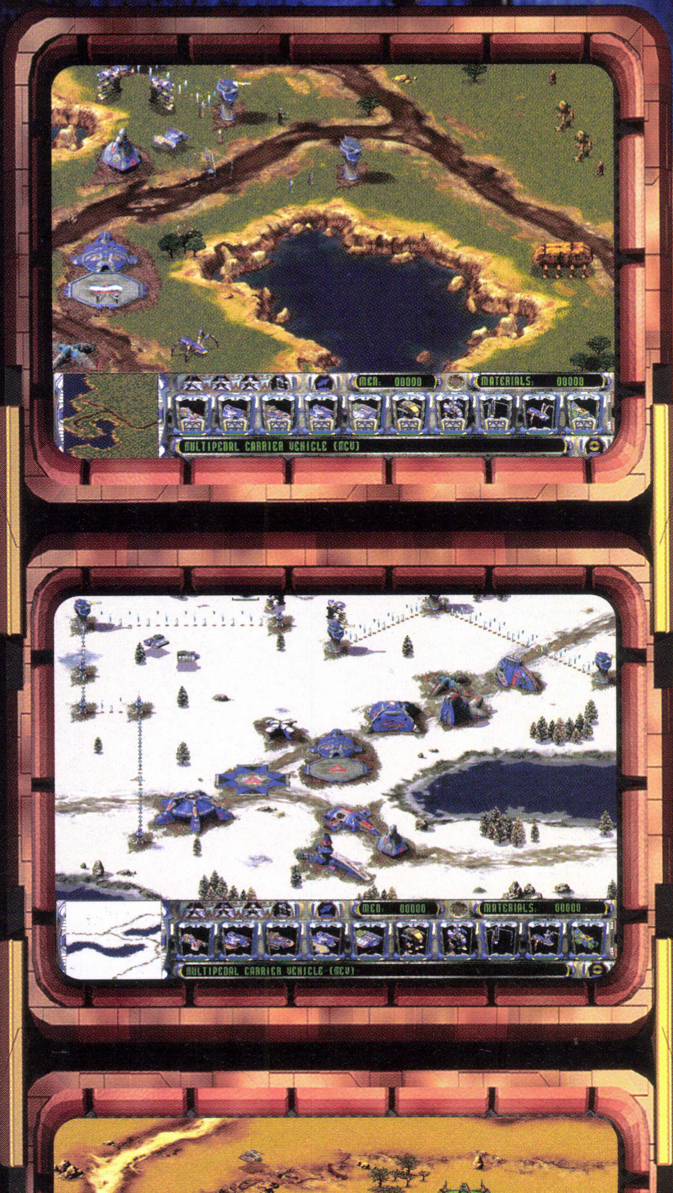
While multiplayer is perhaps the most conspicuous new feature in the game, for most gamers the extensive changes in resource management, ship design, combat, and the interface will be more important. Things have gotten more complex and more detailed. Gone are the fleets of 32,000 generic ships; you now have fewer ships of much more detailed and involved design. Food is now a production item; managing hunger on many different systems and building enough freighters to shift it from about are important responsibilities. Leaders are available, to manage systems or to influence combat. Custom races, reminiscent of the custom wizards in Simtex' own *Master of Magic*, allow you to design your favorite species.

Much of the game remains familiar to anyone who has played *Master of Orion*. Movement is pretty much the same, and while combat has gotten more complex, with shield and weapon arcs, boarding actions , carriers with starfighters, and the like, ship design is still a struggle. Diplomacy works much the same as in the original, though with some added options. Every decent terran planet seems to be guarded yet again by space crystals, amoebas, or dragons. You can expect to face the same sorts of intransigent, unfaithful neighbors, wandering space disasters, and the odd beneficial happenstance in this game as you did in the original. Technology trees are now known, and there are many ways to get all the tech you need (perhaps too many).

Have all these changes improved the breed? That depends. The interface leaves something to be desired in its presentation of vital information. Crucial facts, such as your maintenance costs for structures on each colony, are almost impossible to find. You're presented with summaries, but nowhere can you find a breakdown, for example, of where exactly Blobulus IV is spending all of its money; you have to remember, or look up the maintenance cost of each structure on the planet individually. No convenient way to get a precise inventory of your planetary structures is present, either, short of moving your cursor over every structure on the colony display, or remembering what you have researched and looking to see what is still available for production. You can discover what defensive installations you have from the system display relatively easily, but not from the colony display. You see how many troops you have garrisoning your planet, but not what their tech level or equipment is until they are in combat. Finally, though nominally a Windows 95 game (there's also a DOS install option), screen resolution is fixed at 640 by 480, and the windows popping up for virtually every game action cannot be resized; move them all you will, fleet or system windows will still block out half the galaxy. You get the impression you're playing a pretty VGA game at times, too, rather than a real SVGA product.

The game is still fun, of course. It is quite entertaining to build custom-designed ships, and fighting battles is a blast, assuming you aren't grossly outclassed. The thrill of discovery and exploration is there, and nothing quite matches the feeling of finally defeating that damn Guardian. There are less enjoyable aspects to *MOO2* as well, however. The AI opponents still seem to cheat; either that, or they are viciously efficient. Even on tutor and easy levels, starting from pre warp tech levels, the AI will expand and develop at a rate which seems impossible to support from their production base. Similarly, no matter what your tech level is, there always seems to

THE FUTURE OF


MEN: 00000
MATERIALS: 00000
MULTIPEDAL CARRIER VEHICLE (MCV)
MEN: 00000
MATERIALS: 00000
MULTIPEDAL CARRIER VEHICLE (MCV)
MEN 00000
MATERIAL 00000

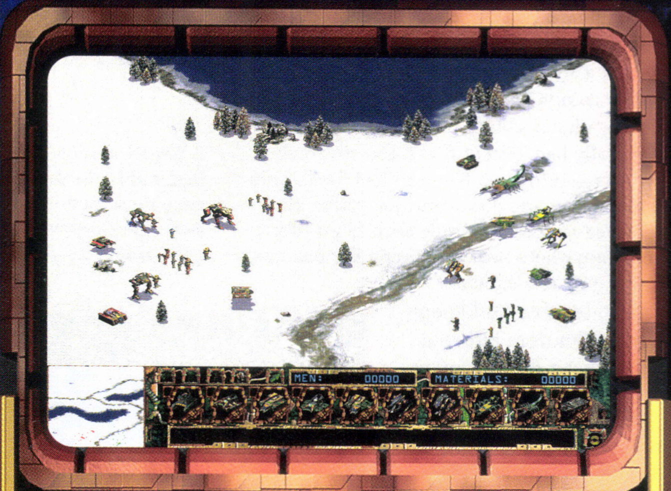
ACTUAL SCREEN SHOTS

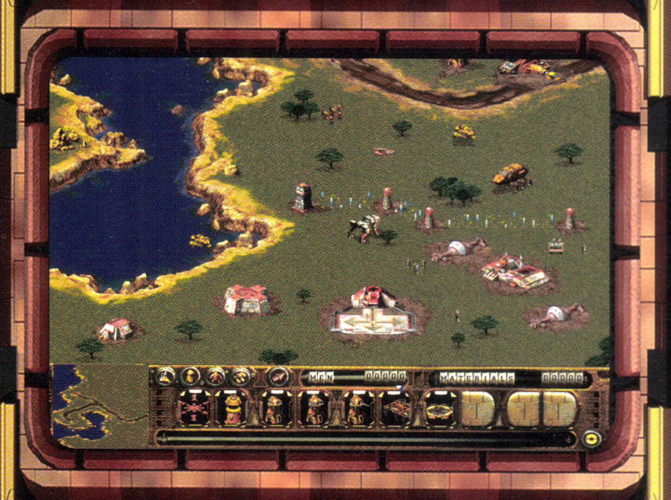
7th LEVEL

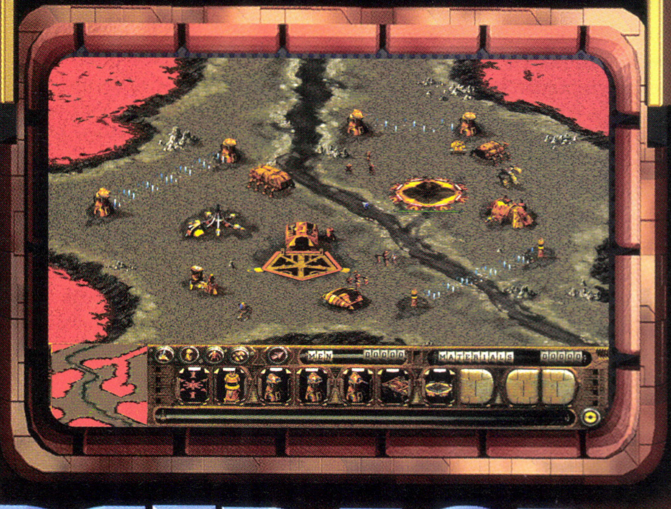
DOMINATION.

Warcraft defined the past. Command & Conquer gave you the present. Now, DOMINION challenges you to the future with fiery real-time strategic combat, resolutions up to 1280 x 1024, and an unprecedented 95,000 frames of real-time 3-D animation.

It's 2224. Say good bye to the tactics that served you well in previous campaigns. Your new reality: battleground strategies vary by planet, and the military-based AI anticipates your every move. Invent new maneuvers with dog-eat-dog Commanders. Sabotage enemy bases with computer viruses, and teleport Men and Materials across-world. Isn't technology great?







Download the
interactive demo at:
www.gamespot.com
www.7thlevel.com

Every 10th download
can win the
complete game.*

DOMINION

*The DOMINION demo may be registered via e-mail. Every 10th registration, of the first 100,000 received, gets a mail-in rebate coupon for the retail cost of DOMINION. Limit one registration per person. Offer only valid in North America. Rebate will be paid in U.S. funds. Void where prohibited.

©1996 7th Level, Inc. 7th Level is a registered trademark of 7th Level, Inc. All other products are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective owners. All rights reserved. 7th Level, Inc., Richardson, TX 75081

be at least one race ahead of you. More bothersome, the racial customization option is woefully unbalanced. Options such as Creative, which gives a race all the technologies in a specific subfield, or Lithovore, which completely obviates the need to farm on any planet, confer huge advantages. That's not really bad, except that these advantages are so tempting you begin to feel foolish *not* taking them; the disadvantages you're also required to take alongside such boons don't come anywhere near redressing the balance, either. Create a subterranean (double world population), lithovore race and you've got a real leg up on the galaxy.

Of course, there is always multiplayer. My advice: find an IPX network and play that way. Playing by modem is, well, torture. Slow does not begin to describe game play, and Simtex has seen fit not to provide a usable chat feature. Only a player who has finished his or her turn can send or receive messages, but once the second player finishes a turn, thus becoming eligible to use the chat feature, the turn ends, and the chat screen vanishes. Voila, instant non-communication. The lack of chatting hurts especially because the game proceeds so slowly. Even early on, when both players are merely clicking the turn button waiting for something to happen, turns can take over a minute to process. It's often much shorter, but sometimes, it's much longer. True, explore and conquer games usually have a slow beginning phase, but in over an hour of play in a smallish galaxy with four players (two human, two computer) each human side garnered a grand total of three colonies, with one inadvertent scout contact to show for it all. It was fun playing with a human out there somewhere to give you the willies, but the cost in time, tied up phone lines, and waiting is too high to make the experience one to cherish.

Overall, *MOO2* delivers most of what was expected for it. Simtex is a design house with much more design expertise than programming savvy, however. This game could really have used a once-over by someone like Sid Meier or Brian Reynolds, to name two very *Civilized* strategy game programmers. Still, there is so much to do in this game that if you like space opera strategy, you'll have to have it. Whether it was worth the wait is another question. Undoubtedly, *Civilization II* was a better sequel, but then the first *Civilization* was better than *MOO* to begin with. All things considered, *MOO2* is one of the better strategy games of 1996, but one with significant flaws. Good, yes; a classic, no. *–Robert Mayer*

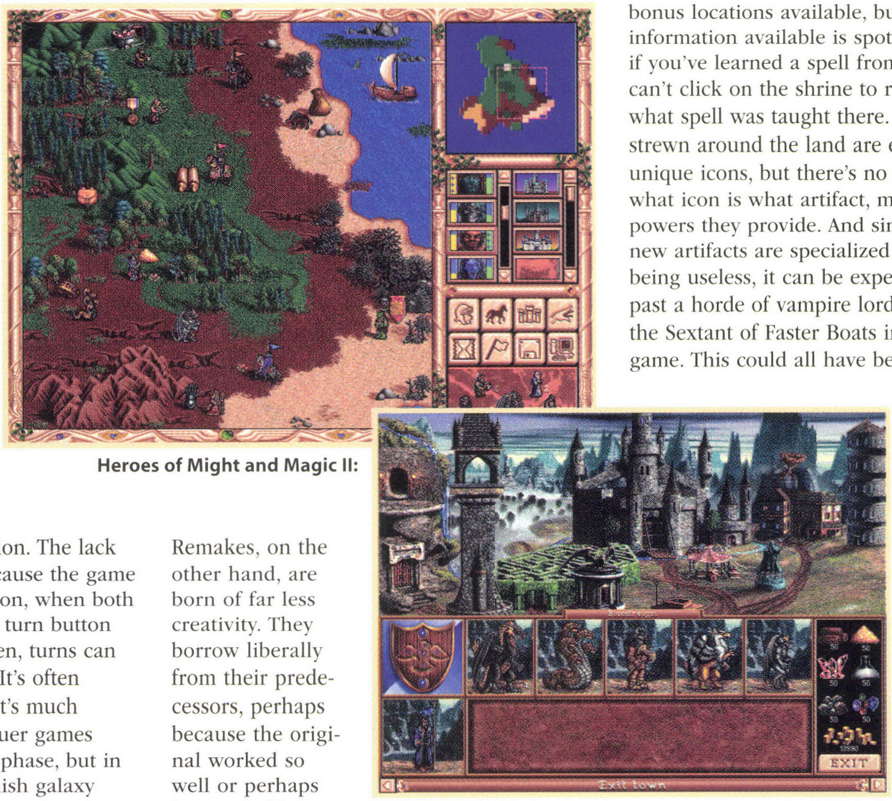
Heroes of Might and Magic II

New World Computing

Windows 95

★★★⯪☆

A sequel is something new and different, inspired by its predecessor, but working to become something unique and wholly separate. The *Godfather II* and *Aliens* are sequels. *Civilization II* and *SimCity 2000* are sequels.



Heroes of Might and Magic II:

Remakes, on the other hand, are born of far less creativity. They borrow liberally from their predecessors, perhaps because the original worked so well or perhaps because of laziness. *Terminator 2* and *101 Dalmatians* are remakes. *X-COM: Terror from the Deep* and *Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries* are remakes. New World Computing's *Heroes of Might and Magic II* is a remake.

This is not to say it's bad, just that it's ultimately not very different. As long as you're not expecting anything new or bold, you're not likely to be disappointed. The fundamentals are identical to the first game, particularly the "killer stack" mentality, whereby you bide your time building up a stack of powerful units and a hero bloated with power and artifacts. The ensuing rampage through the enemy's territory into his cities tends to be anticlimactic. A token nod is made towards resources; you occupy mines and gather stray treasure, but the game always comes down to dueling stacks in the end, even with the addition of variable victory conditions.

The nature of tactical combat has changed very little, with the exception of more spells and more room to maneuver. These two changes do, however, allow for more nuances in gameplay than the original. The new spread of spells will be useful for all sorts of different styles, allowing shrewd players more opportunities to modify attack and defense values while less advanced players will just lob fireballs. The map is considerably larger, so ranged attacks have more time to inflict damage and slow powerful units become a serious hindrance for offensive actions. Occasional obstacles in the battlefield can slow some units, but unfortunately, terrain still plays no role in combat.

On the strategic level, there are more bonus locations available, but the onscreen information available is spotty. For instance, if you've learned a spell from a shrine, you can't click on the shrine to remind yourself what spell was taught there. The artifacts strewn around the land are each indicated by unique icons, but there's no indication of what icon is what artifact, much less what powers they provide. And since many of the new artifacts are specialized to the point of being useless, it can be expensive to fight past a horde of vampire lords, only to win the Sextant of Faster Boats in a land-locked game. This could all have been alleviated with more consistent right-click options and better references in an otherwise thorough manual.

The graphics are crisp and clear, with lots of detail and fluid animations in combat. Each character class has distinctive city graphics and music (with haunting *lieder* in far too few places). The city screens are breathtaking, as tiny hamlets grow into fully developed metropolises, but some functionality is lost in all this splendor. One of the most significant changes is the inclusion of a resource marketplace to trade for and buy scarce resources. There are a few extra building types, but as with the rest of the game, there are no fundamental changes.

A new skill system makes heroes even more powerful, and gives them distinct personae as a game progresses. Unfortunately, this strength of the game is all but lost in a weak campaign scheme that's merely a string of canned scenarios. The option to keep a hero through a series of games would have given this game a much longer-term appeal. Solid multiplayer gameplay and a comprehensive scenario editor make up for this somewhat. The multiplayer games are taxing, however, since the game locks a player out when he's not taking his turn and there's no way to limit turn length or cut out the tactical combat.

Heroes of Might and Magic was a fun, but superficial, strategy game. By adding lots of new details, this remake isn't less superficial, but it is more fun. So if complexity isn't high up on your list of priorities and you don't mind a little *deja vu*, this not-quite-sequel in a season of sequels and remakes is definitely one of the safe bets. *–Tom Chick*

Lords of the Realm II

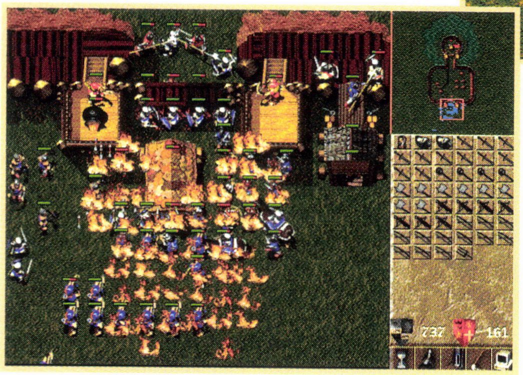
Sierra

Windows 95

★★★½☆

Harken back to merry olde England and take the "reigns" [sic] of a budding kingdom in Sierra's *Lords of the Realm II.* The king is dead, and as happens so often in gaming universes, the remaining nobles are squabbling for control of his lands. You, of course, are the rightful successor, but you'll need to prove that to the others.

Gameplay is divided into two parts. First is concurrent mode play on the county level. Here you'll view the entire game map, moving armies and supplies from county to county, building an economic infrastructure and sending taunts and compliments to (or allying with) other nobles. When armies clash, gameplay switches to a tactical real-time battle mode, somewhat similar to *Warcraft* but really more reminiscent of the old Mindcraft games *Ambush* or *Siege*. The battle mode is always optional. The computer can "autocalc" any battle and does a very decent job of returning reasonable results.

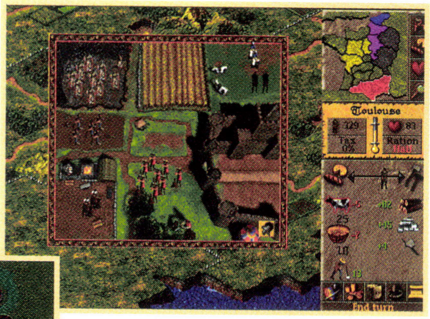


The county level is a classic resource management game. Each county has a set amount of arable land, which you can use for farming wheat or raising cattle to feed your peasants. Ample food means your peasants will be happy and healthy, and consequently, population will increase. In addition to raising food, you'll need to put your peasants to work gathering resources, raising castles, and building the weapons of war. Population also produce taxes; useful for buying supplies you're short of, or hiring mercenary armies.

Mercenaries show up at your county centers, and are a great way to wage war without mucking up a county's economy. The problem is, mercs are costly, won't work together and never seem to show up when you really need them. When the merc guild isn't cooperating, you can form an army from your populace. Recruit a mass of peasants, issue them weapons and send them off. Of course, these peasants are no longer tilling the fields or working in the smithy, and those that are left tend to get pretty testy about your conscription of their sons.

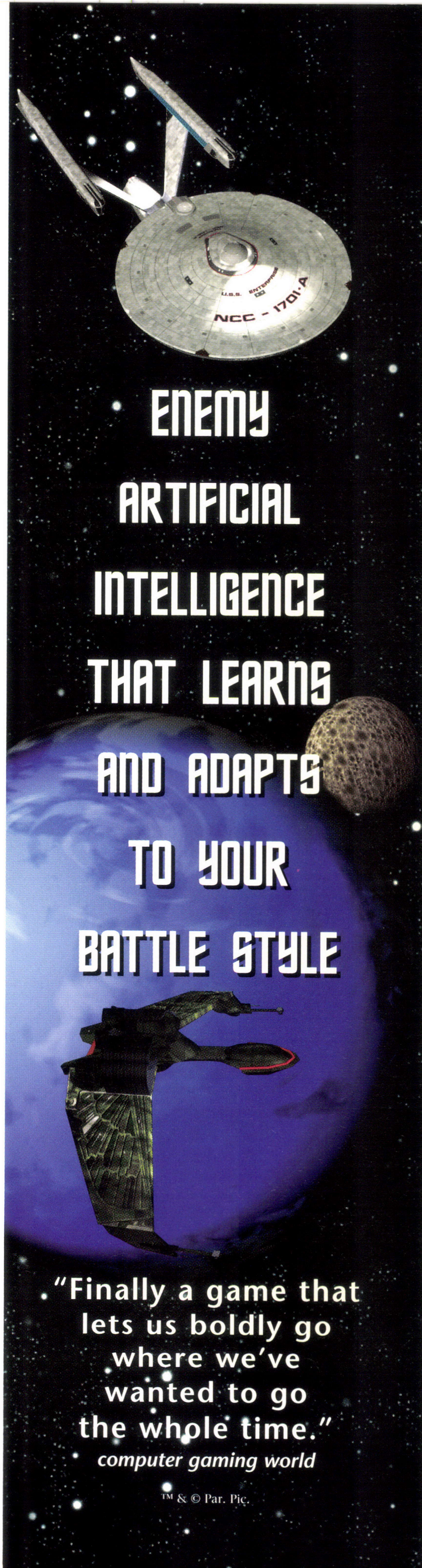
When two armies meet, you'll enter the real-time battle mode. Open field battles tend to be fairly simple affairs. Armies consist of peasants, archers, macemen, swordsman, crossbow troops, pikemen, and knights. Each type of troop has its own strengths and weaknesses, though knights tend to clang the helms of all opponents.

Sieges are much more interesting than open field battles. When an army lays siege to a castle, you'll first decide how many siege engines, catapults and battering rams to build. These may take several turns to put together, during which time the opponent can send an army to break up the siege. Assuming he doesn't, battle begins and you'll need to breach the castle walls, fill in the moat, bust down the gates, and fight your way to the inner keep. Archers and boiling oil on the castle walls will make this an unpleasant experience, to say the least. Take the castle and you've taken the county. Take every county, and you've won the game.

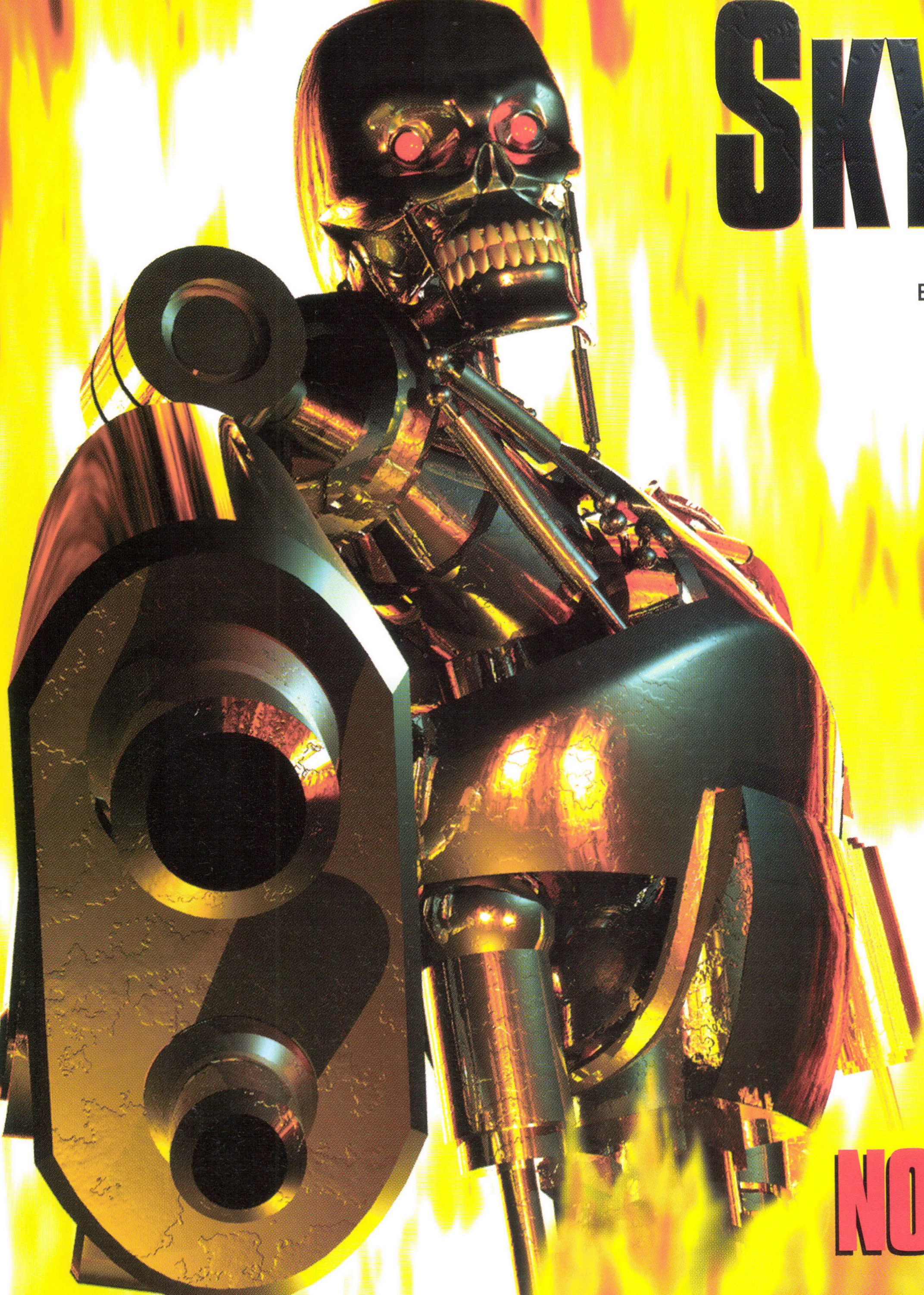


Lords of the Realm II

Lords of the Realm II includes a custom scenario builder (though no map editor), a single campaign of eight maps, and of course multi-player modes, including DirectPlay support. While the AI is fair (the early scenarios of the campaign are quite easy—don't judge the AI until you get deeper into it) the game comes into its own against a human opponent(s). Advanced options include a hidden map, advanced farming (you need to let fields lie fallow from time to time) and army foraging (any army, even an opponent's, eats the food in a



SkyNET



Explosive Multiplayer Action.
Compete as one of
6 Combatants
or 2 Cyborgs.
IPX LAN/Modem.
Deathmatch:
NO LIMITS■

City streets.
Los Angeles Hills.
Interiors/Exteriors.
SkyNet Compounds.
Multiplayer Battlefields.
Single Player Missions.
True 3D SVGA Visuals.
Environment:
NO LIMITS■

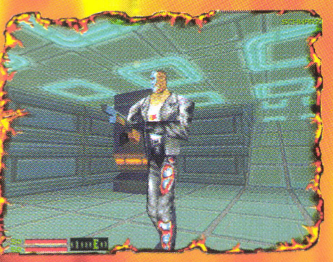
Weaponry: 20+ total.
Heat-seeking missiles.
Motion tracker.
Methods of Destruction:
NO LIMITS■

Ground Combat. Rampage
by Jeep.
Aerial assault.
Modes of Combat:
NO LIMITS■

Revolutionary
XnGine™
True 3D system.
6º of freedom.
Control System:
NO LIMITS■

NO LIMITS

For PC CD-ROM



The Cyberdyne building should be to the northwest.

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

POWERED BY XnGine®

BETHESDA SOFTWORKS™

1370 Piccard Drive, Suite 120, Rockville, MD 20850 • BBS: 301 990-7552 • Fax: 301 926-8010 • Website: http://www.bethsoft.com

Copyright © 1996 Bethesda Softworks. All Rights Reserved. XnGine® is a registered trademark of Media Technology Limited. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

county before the peasants do). These options change the game significantly, and add replay value.

Gameplay is fairly solid, with enough basic strategies to keep you entertained for quite a while. Do you concentrate on conquest right away, or attempt to build a strong economic base first? Do you attack the opponent directly, or burn his fields and slaughter his peasants in order to destroy his economy? Counties need constant attention, and different counties tend to present different problems. However, late in a game the constant tweaking each county requires becomes tiresome. Also, variable victory conditions would have been appreciated. There comes a point where it is clear you'll win the game, but you still have to slog through the last counties in order to defeat each opponent.

In all, *Lords of the Realm II* is a solid game, but it isn't terribly original. You've done all this before, (though possibly not all in one package) and if you haven't, then *Lords II* becomes a must-buy; it's a wonderful genre and one which *hasn't* been done to death. Even for you gamers who've been uniting the kingdom since way back in *Defender of the Crown* days, this is a worthy purchase—one you'll get many, many hours of enjoyable gameplay out of. *–Peter Smith*

Battleground: Antietam

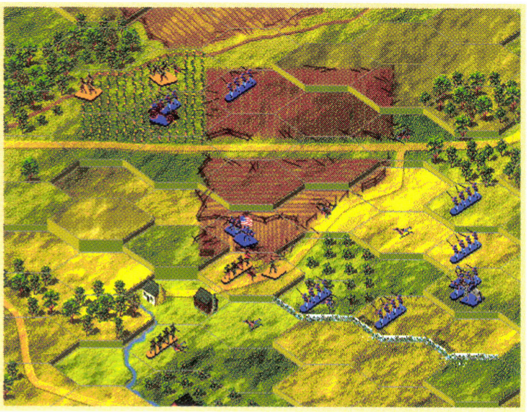
TalonSoft

Windows 95

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL

★★★★½

When it comes to wargaming, every *grognard* has his (or her) own favorite period in history which they'll game time and time again to the exclusion of all else. Unfortunately, my regular opponents don't share my excitement when a new American Civil War (ACW) game arrives; before I could say, "Wow, it has Play by E-mail," I was rapidly set upon by a horde of irate gamers, locked in the computer room (sans modem) and abruptly told to "get it out of my system pronto!" Settling down with a warm beer and some stale pretzels, I set eagerly to work.



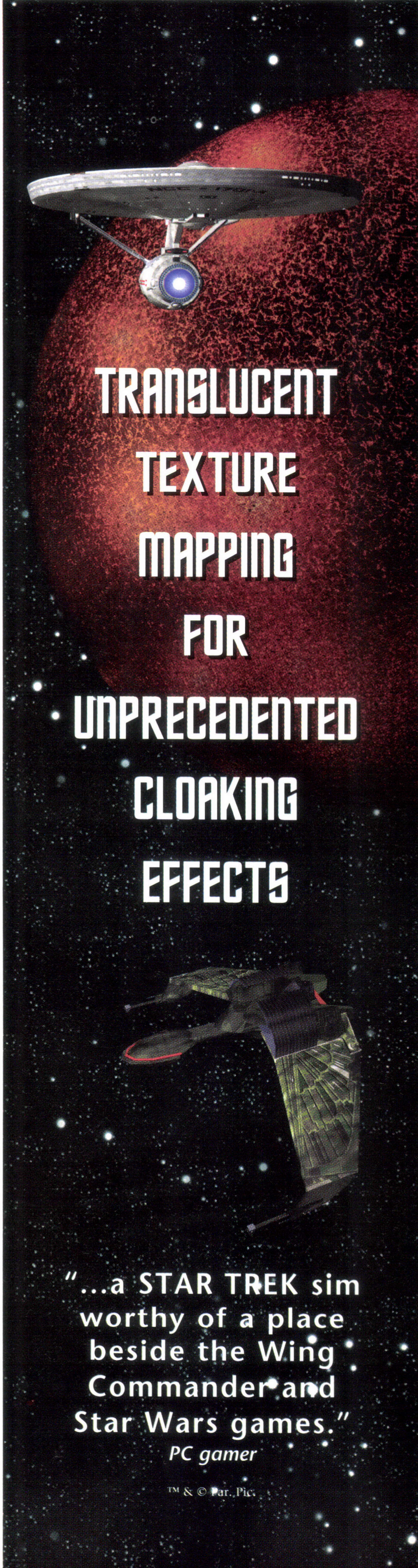
Battleground: Antietam

Battleground: Antietam simulates the set-piece battle between General George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac and General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, around the town of Sharpsburg, Maryland on September 17, 1862. The designers have also featured a bonus battle, South Mountain, which occurred several days prior to this engagement.

Regular players will be happy to know that the designers have eschewed the temptation of tampering with the basic system; those of you competent with its predecessor, *Shiloh*, will have no trouble tackling *Antietam*. Unfortunately, the same also extends to the computer AI; while some improvements have been made, the computer opponent still comes up with some incredibly quirky and erratic maneuvers from time to time. The inclusion of head-to-head play via modem, email or hot-seat partially lifts the burden of guilt from TalonSoft's shoulders, but they still get lower marks for this *faux pas* and several other inconsistencies. Luckily, this is the only true negative I could come up with after some pretty intense gaming.

The game looks and sounds just as impressive as its predecessors do. The Battleview map provides the player with one of the best isometric renditions of a battlefield ever seen in a PC game, and the period music, sound effects and multimedia re-enactments all add to the feeling that you're truly there. I do suggest you turn off the multimedia clips after the first few turns, though; they lengthen the turn resolution process considerably and, like *Gilligan's Island* re-runs, tend to become rather monotonous and repetitive.

As an avid student of this battle, what really impresses me with this system is the accuracy with which it simulates this engagement and ACW conflict in general. Read the extensive bibliography provided (if you're so inclined) and compare the eye-witness accounts, after-action reports and historical analyses with the inherent gameplay and you'll find this game simulates most of these observations with uncanny exactitude. The ranged fire and melee rules carry enough chrome to display the strengths and weaknesses of each weapon type and simulate the deadliness of melees to a vicious degree (most melees consisted of volley fire between opposing lines at point-blank range–30 yards or less–rather than the implied hand-to-hand combat, with the side that broke first becoming the loser). The fatigue and disruption rules handle the ebb and flow of battle neatly; disruption limits the number of times your units can melee


TRANSLUCENT TEXTURE MAPPING FOR UNPRECEDENTED CLOAKING EFFECTS
"...a STAR TREK sim worthy of a place beside the Wing Commander and Star Wars games."
PC gamer
™ & © Par. Pic.

THE BEST SIMULATION GAMES STRATEGIES & SECRETS
THE BEST ADVENTURE & ROLE PLAYING GAMES STRATEGIES & SECRETS
S&S GAMES
THE BEST STRATEGY & War Games STRATEGIES & SECRETS
THE BEST ACTION & ARCADE STRATEGIES & SECRETS
OFFICIAL DUKE NUKEM 3D STRATEGIES & SECRETS
DUKE NUKEM DOES THE INTERNET
The Gamer's Bare-Knuckle Guide to the Net
OFFICIAL THE DUKE NUKEM 3D LEVEL DESIGN HANDBOOK
COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS

Hit the Books

THEN KICK SOME ASS

SYBEX BOOKS
STRATEGIES & SECRETS™

also for

Obsidian
SimCity 2000
Duke Nukem 3D-Plutonium Pak
Myst
Civilization II
Nascar Racing
Magic: The Gathering

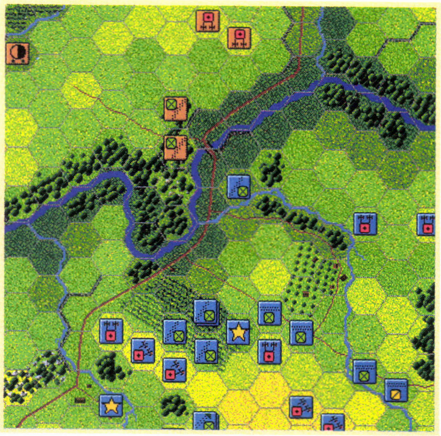
To ORDER Call 1-800-699-4263
and mention code #10808
or visit your local computer store or bookstore

©1997 Sybex Computer Books

SYBEX®

the opposition, while overly fatigued units will suffer a marked reduction in their ranged combat strength. Try to hang on too long and you'll watch most of your line "skedaddling" to the rear quicker than you can say "Here come the rebs."

On the technical side of things, make sure you do a typical install (all 85Mb of it) if you plan to play one of the larger scenarios; the lag time when loading the map from the CD is considerable, even with a fast CD-ROM, and the compact install just won't cut it. The other little problem concerns the PBEM file format. As the disruption/rout results aren't hard-coded into the file, they actually change each time you open the file, as I accidentally discovered during a recent game. If you're patient you can open the file repeatedly until you're happy with the results before continuing with the game. As most *grognards* are honest souls, this probably won't be irksome to the average gamer, but it *is* an oversight that should probably be corrected in future games.



Battleground: Antietam

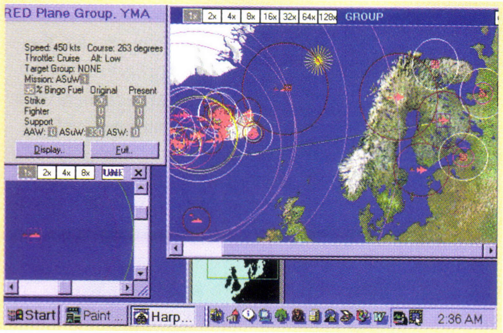
Overall, *Antietam* adds yet another feather to the cap …er, wing of that steely eyed eagle in the TalonSoft logo. Whoever said, "when you're on a good thing, stick to it" certainly knew what he was talking about … and this latest foray is certainly a worthy addition to the *Battleground* series. Whether you're an ACW die-hard or a gamer looking for a change of pace, this game comes highly recommended! *-Phil Thé*

Harpoon Classic 97

Interactive Magic

Windows 95

★★★☆☆



RED Plane Group. YMA

Speed: 450 kts Course: 263 degrees
Throttle: Cruise Alt: Low
Target Group: NONE
Mission: ASuW

Harpoon Classic 97

In this age of full-motion-video throwaways, *Harpoon Classic 97* from I-Magic arrives like a T-Rex from Jurassic Park to show us the way games were; full of gameplay and thick, well written manuals. A lot of water has passed under the keel since *Harpoon* first came out. When a 386/33 was considered a fast machine, I played *Harpoon* more than any other game before or since.

Harpoon Classic 97 brings gameplay back from the past in abundance. There are 267 scenarios, including all the old battlesets, and fifty new ones postulating a war between Europe and the US at the turn of the century. *Harpoon 97* also brings speed. Even the largest scenarios ran at a brisk pace on my now aging Pentium 90, not slowing from real time; it is one game that should not cow older systems.

The graphics are basic and to the point, with a major exception: for those with the horsepower, a beautiful full relief map may be turned on instead of the tired old monotone terrain. Sound effects are appropriate, if not spectacular. The now quaint versions of national anthems still play when victory appears. There is a neater, more elegant interface, though you still can't have more than one group window open at a time.

Amazingly, they even kept the sacred hot-key commands from the old version. Even though they aren't documented, function keys one through ten still work, so you don't waste time hunting with the mouse or trying to type the silly control + number key sequences, which they do document.

There are two major gripes: while there is still a pause command, you cannot do anything while paused; second, plane groups don't show their primary plane type. When the fur is flying thick and fast and there are ten thousand messages to be clicked on, it can be nearly impossible to do anything coherent because of interruptions; and if you *can* do something, you can't tell (for example) which fighter is which, unless you have a good memory for aircraft speeds at cruise, military, etc. Why such decisions were made can only be conjectured, but they seriously detract from an otherwise splendid game. Had pause still allowed you to issue commands and if planes models were shown, the game would have rated much higher. *–Sam Baker*

PlayStation
MacPlay CD-ROM
developed and published by
Interplay
BY GAMERS. FOR GAMERS.™
THE FIRST AND ONLY STAR TREK ACTION FLIGHT SIM
COMING THIS SPRING
for Win 95/DOS, Macintosh and PlayStation Game Console
STAR TREK STARFLEET ACADEMY
RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Paramount Interactive
STAR TREK 30 YEARS
http://www.interplay.com
Starfleet Academy Software ©1996 Interplay Productions. Trademarks and ©1996 Paramount Productions. All rights reserved. Star Trek, Starfleet Academy and related marks are trademarks of Paramount Pictures. All rights reserved. MacPlay and Interplay are trademarks of Interplay Productions. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and copyrights are properties of their respective owners. All rights reserved.

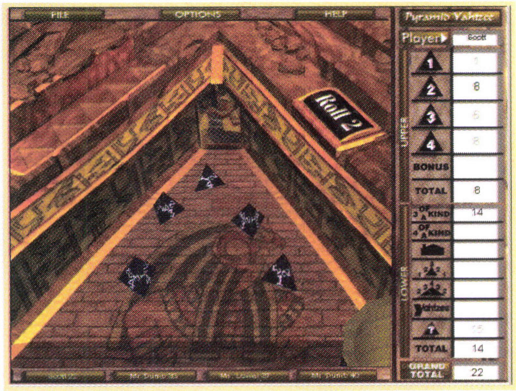
Ultimate Yahtzee

Hasbro Interactive

Windows

★★★⯪☆

Even if you've never played it, you've probably heard of *Yahtzee*, the classic game of dice. Dice games are very physical games: the shake of the dice, the patter as they roll across a playing surface, all those little environmental effects that would seem almost impossible to duplicate on the computer. Surprisingly, *Ultimate Yahtzee* from Hasbro Interactive does both a good job of capturing the feel of dice and coming up with a pretty fun set of games as well. In addition to Classic Yahtzee and Triple Yahtzee you get Painted (which adds color combinations into the mix), Pyramid (a faster playing game with pyramidal dice), and the unique Battle Yahtzee, wherein you and one other opponent get chances to mess up the other player's rolls with your own toss of the dice. The computer opponents play well (even the weakest usually beats me) and games are generally fast. The graphics are well done, and the way you roll the dice actually matters (especially in Battle Yahtzee). While not a game with a lot of depth, it's still quite fun; the kind of thing you boot up when you just want to play a game for the heck of it. – *Scott Udell*



Ultimate Yahtzee

Power Chess

Sierra

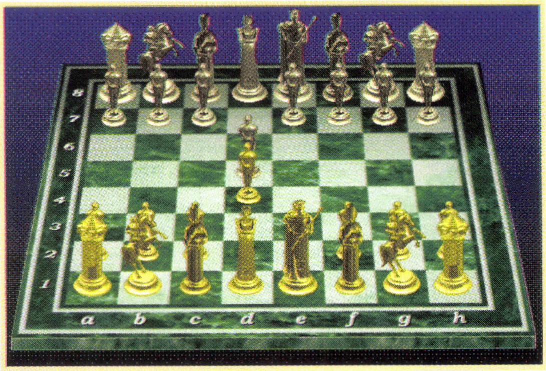
Windows 95

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL

★★★★☆

Sierra's *Power Chess* is based on the professional chess program, *WChess*. *WChess* won the 1994 Harvard Cup, beating a record number of grandmasters. Forget the usual stuff like, "is it the strongest chess program ever?" Be content in that the program will crush all but the top ten percent of tournament players in the world. The game's real value is in its instructional functions. *Power Chess* delivers a fresh, addictive, and innovative way for the rest of us to improve our play.

The featured teaching aspect of the game is the relationship of the Power King and Power Queen. The King is a sensitive chess engine that grades its play to the player's strength. The King plays solid chess, but will make a few mild mistakes which it's up to the player which to capitalize on. Sierra claims the King is the most human of any chess program and they are not exaggerating. His play will take on an emotional aspect depending on the strength of his position. The King will remember the player's abilities between games and adjust accordingly.



Power Chess

The Queen provides the full, undiluted *Wchess* engine to analyze play following a game. The commentary is voiced–delivered in plain English. This is an incredible leap forward for anyone who's tried to decipher a 10 move line rendered as an alternative by one of the leading professional programs. Her commentary is stunningly flexible and insightful. It's easily the best adaptive digitized speech seen to date.

The prerequisites are here, such as beautiful 3-D pieces, hint functions, PGN compatibility, historic games, and positional evaluation. The player may also choose different "commoners," or create their own opponents in the form of "Nobles." The commoners are modeled on the playing styles of notable grandmasters.

Unless the word *Fritz* means something to you, this is *the* chess program to buy. The Queen's entertaining commentary will keep you spell bound while your playing strength steadily improves! – *Chuck Klimushyn*

Extreme Chess

Davidson

Windows

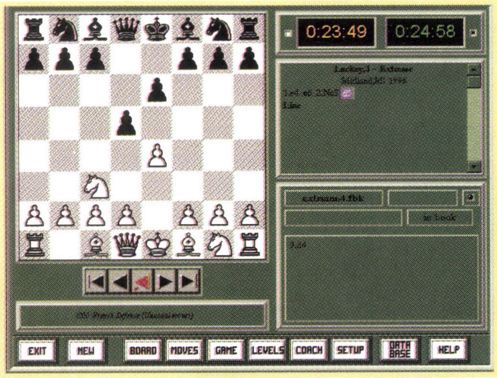
COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL

★★★★☆

Since most of today's chess programs can beat all but the most talented human players, publishers have turned to adding all manner of bells and whistles (e.g., elaborate pieces and boards, music, cute computer opponents, etc.) to differentiate their products. Davidson has bucked the trend with this game. Rather than release another multimedia extravaganza, the company has given us a strong chess engine combined with a clean interface, excellent analysis tools, and enough practical features to satisfy most serious players.

Someone used to chess programs with 100 chess sets and Klingon boards may initially be disappointed at the game's rather simple appearance. Only one set of 2D pieces and one set (albeit customizable) of 3D pieces are included; worse, the 3D set is rather crude looking. The 2D setup, however, is a standard and very playable set. Make no mistake, this game's strength is *not* its graphics!

Once you get past the graphics and the lack of other multimedia pizzazz , the beauty of the game begins to peek through. You are given a choice of two chess engines, Fritz 3.0 and Fritz 4.1, both well respected in the serious chess community. The program comes with a very functional database of 50,000 games, and the ability to import and export PGN and Chessbase files. The ability to load opening books is included, as well as the capability of handling Powerbooks. The analysis mode is complete and powerful: it will analyze your games and insert alternate lines of play and comments (e.g., "black gives back the material"). You can set the program to play at a chosen ECO ratings level, as well as have the program rate your play. All time controls are available and fully modifiable. The game will chat with you during the game, making witty and sometimes very insightful comments on the play.



Extreme Chess

Bottom line: if you're a serious player and/or you value functionality over frills, this is your program. I've deleted all the other chess programs on my hard drive. –*Jeff Lackey*

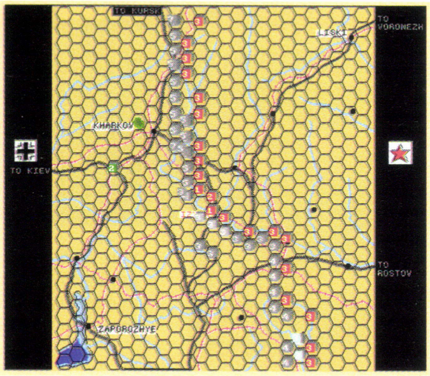
Izyum

Schwerpunkt

DOS

★★★☆☆

Until recently, there were few PC-based wargame offerings that covered the middle ground between the sweeping simulations of grand strategy and the detailed recreations of famous military battles. In fact, there was rarely anything to satisfy the frustrated wargamer-historian yearning to relive the many lesser known, but no less engaging, operational-level conflicts of World War II.



Izyum

Enter Schwerpunkt, with their rapidly expanding War in the East series. *Izyum,* the fifth addition to its roster, is geographically set between Kharkov and the Sea of Azov in southern Russia and spans the highly volatile period from early 1942 to late 1943. As my first experience with the War in the East design, I found *Izyum* to be a refreshing and challenging PC adaptation that was reminiscent of the bygone era of paper map boards and cardboard counters–without the administrative hassle.

With an emphasis on accurate orders of battle and interwoven with campaign commentaries that include the week-by-week progress of the battle, there is not much here that would disappoint a wargaming *grognard* with a bent towards military history. Schwerpunkt makes no excuses for their frugal graphics, stressing instead the more nobler aspects of game design that enable players to practice strategy unfettered by complex rules and inhibiting game mechanics. The five different scenarios presented in this battle set center on the Izyum bulge, and the subsequent battles that raged along the Donets River, as the initiative changed hands during the course of the war. Combine this variety with a reasonably aggressive AI and you have a window into history that will peak your interest for some time to come.

An interesting game option, called Fog of War, models command and control capabilities–giving the German player a slight historical advantage. This option also restricts intelligence on the enemy's true strength and location (unless air reconnaissance is successful), magnifying the risks associated with conducting large scale military operations. If that were not enough, your degree of victory (or grade: A through F) is determined by how well you performed against your historical counterpart. So if you think you can do better than von Manstein, with his 1943 backhand blow that restored the German southern front and recaptured Kharkov, or exceed Timoshenko by preempting the 1942 German Spring offensive, then this is the experience you have been waiting for. *–Mark McIntosh*

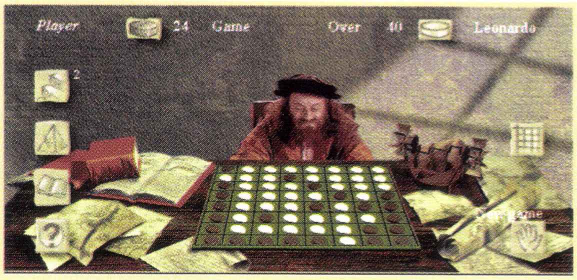
Othello

Hasbro Interactive

Windows 95

★★⯪☆☆

Othello (also called *Reversi* in its generic form) is one of those classic strategy games you either love or could care less about, and this newest PC version by Hasbro Interactive is no different. As with most chess programs, *Othello* offers the fanatic or the beginner wanting to learn more quite a lot: multiple skill levels, different game boards, hint features, strategy sections (with advice on things like opening moves, the mid-game, etc.; again, just like chess programs), a tips feature, and even two amusing opponents in the form of "Leonardo da Vinci" and "Albert Einstein," characters who display subtle yet distinct personality while playing. If you're already an aficionado of the game, then *Othello* is definitely a must; if not, then the package really doesn't offer enough extra to make you into one. *–Scott Udell*



Othello

Battleground: Bulge (Ardennes Deluxe)

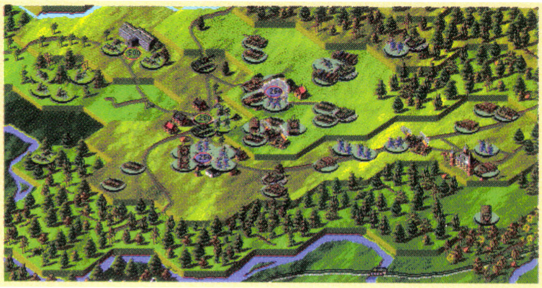
TalonSoft Inc.

Windows

★★★★☆

TalonSoft's first venture into wargaming, *Battleground: Ardennes*, has recently been updated and is now on the shelves under a new title, *Battleground: Bulge (Ardennes Deluxe)*. Most of the original game's mechanics remain the same, but new features enhance the realism and scope of this simulation of Germany's last gasp on the western front. To those familiar with the earlier version of *Ardennes,* the most noticeable change in the game is the new set of 3D graphics. The isometric views now have a more realistic appearance through the use of texture mapped terrain and detailed landscape features; the forested hexes are particularly impressive.

Of perhaps more importance, however, are the revisions TalonSoft has made to the game engine through the use of a Strength Points (SP) system. Each unit is now assigned a SP value which reflects its combat effectiveness, its contribution towards a hex's stacking limit and, in the case of vehicular units, its ability to carry passengers. As a unit is damaged during combat its SP value diminishes and, consequently, its capability to dish out retribution is similarly reduced. Strength Points are now included on the Unit List display, giving the player a better idea as to the condition of his forces. A handicap option gives one side or the other an advantage (on a scale of 0 to 100) during game play. The side with the advantage loses fewer strength points during combat.



Battleground: Bulge (Ardennes Deluxe)

Many other tweaks have been incorporated into the game. Line of Sight (LOS) rules have been revised to reflect fog-of-war conditions more realistically. Undetected forces are not automatically revealed when they come into a moving enemy unit's LOS. Instead, a unit's ability to remain hidden is based on its SP value and the unit type. Artillery units can temporarily run out of ammunition. Two new mapsets are included in *Ardennes Deluxe* to cover the battles around St. Vith and Rochfort, and 14 new scenarios have been added.

Wargamers interested in tactical level WWII combat should have *Ardennes Deluxe* in their collection. It is challenging for veteran gamers, particularly when playing the larger scenarios (the "siege" of Bastogne is my favorite). TalonSoft retained the simple-to-use interface of the original game, making *Ardennes Deluxe* easy enough for less seasoned players who would like to try their hand at historical-based wargaming. *–Rex Whitfield* by Robert Mayer

Steel Panthers II: Modern Battles

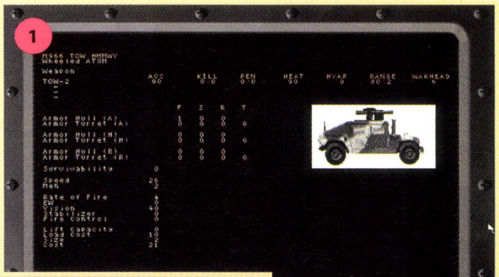
New tactics for new technologies

One of the reasons many wargamers like modern tactical games is the variety of weaponry available for table top and computer carnage. While WWII, probably the most popular period for tactical games, offers the best atmosphere, historical background, and mix of technologies over time, modern games dump the whole spectrum of high intensity combat on you from turn one. Missiles, helicopters, massive battle tanks, cluster bombs, air mobility, night vision—modern games have it all, and in spades. SSI's recent *Steel Panthers II: Modern Battles* (*SP2*) is no exception to this rule. Within the confines of that little CD lurk enough explosions, fires, air strikes and guided missiles to slate the bloodlust of even the most jaded of simulated warriors.

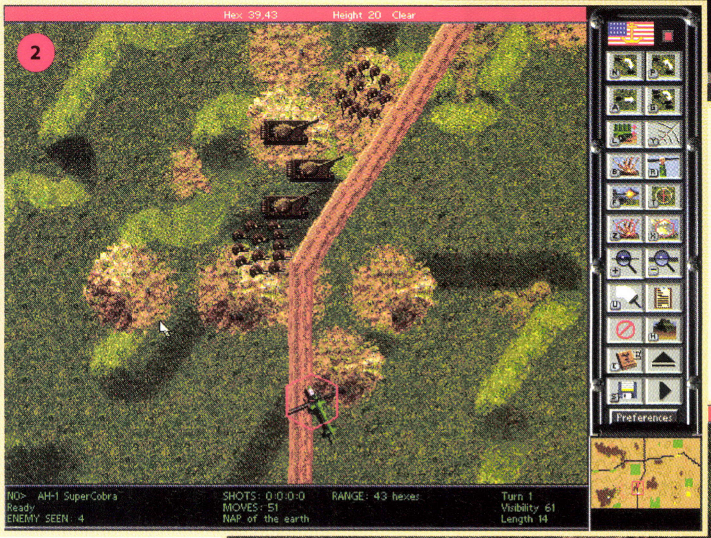
Of course, these toys play both ways. Too often, you might find yourself on the receiving end of one too many ATGMs, or discover your prize armored force ventilated with sabot rounds. That brings us to one of the other joys of modern tactical games, figuring out ways to avoid getting smoked by the other side's tools of the trade. Veterans of *Steel Panthers* will no doubt be delighted with all the new toys in *SP2*, but that novelty can soon turn to frustration. While the two games are quite similar in most respects, the new technology in *SP2* mandates some new tactics, or refinements of old ones. There are three technologies in particular that shape the battle field in *SP2*: ATGMs, MBTs, and helicopters. Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGMs) combine the killing power of large HEAT rounds with long range, accurate guidance systems. Modern Main Battle Tanks (MBTs, replacing the medium and heavy tanks of yore) carry more armor and more powerful armament than anything you've seen before, and carry it faster. Helicopters are the scouts, long range strike force, and taxis of the modern battlefield; skimming the treetops, choppers carry missiles, guns, and rockets and represent an omnipresent deep threat for whichever side can best employ them.

Is that a missile, or are you just happy to see me?

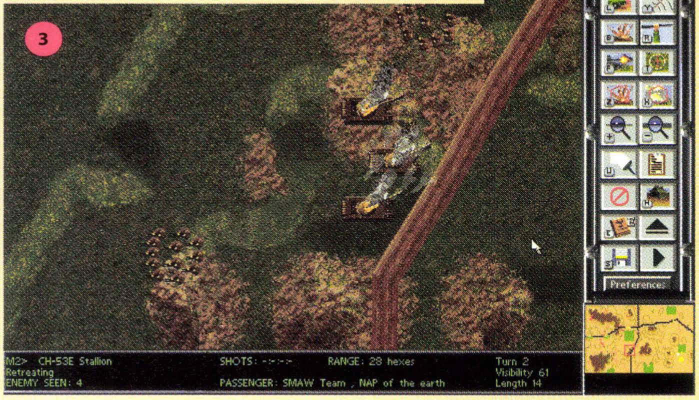
Missiles are perhaps the simplest to grasp in tactical terms, but their ubiquity and overall effectiveness make them very deadly. They are not so much a problem in early scenarios (those taking place, say, between 1960 and 1973), but become progressively more troublesome, until they reach their peak somewhere around the mid 1980s (before reactive armor and composites begin to redress the balance). Even in contemporary or near future scenarios, however, improvements in warheads and guidance systems mean that ATGMs remain a deadly threat to armor. Three things make missiles so deadly: they are accurate, long ranged, and powerful. This trio of capabilities is all the more frightening when you consider that usually every infantry platoon has some sort of ATGM system. In a modern battle, you can reasonably expect to face dozens of ATGM launchers.



```
M966 TOW HMMWV
Wheeled ATGM

Weapon                    ACC      KILL     PEN      HEAT     HVAP     RANGE    WARHEAD
TOW-2                      90       0:0     0:0       90        0      80:2         6
  -
  -
  -

                              F    S    R    T
Armor Hull (A)                1    0    0
Armor Turret (A)              0    0    0    0

Armor Hull (H)                0    0    0
Armor Turret (H)              0    0    0    0

Armor Hull (R)                0    0    0
Armor Turret (R)              0    0    0    0

Survivability            0

Speed                   26
Men                      2

Rate of Fire             4
EW                       0
Vision                  40
Stabilizer               0
Fire Control             0

Lift Capacity            0
Load Cost               10
Size                     2
Cost                    21
```



```
Hex 39,43          Height 20   Clear

NO>  AH-1 SuperCobra          SHOTS: 0:0:0:0     RANGE: 43 hexes      Turn 1
Ready                         MOVES: 51                               Visibility 61
ENEMY SEEN: 4                 NAP of the earth                        Length 14
```



```
M2>  CH-53E Stallion          SHOTS: -:-:-:-     RANGE: 28 hexes                 Turn 2
Retreating                                                                       Visibility 61
ENEMY SEEN: 4                 PASSENGER: SMAW Team , NAP of the earth            Length 14
```

[1] This TOW-2 has a minimum range of two hexes; check the encyclopedia!

[2] Ah, they think they're safe...

[3] ...but helicopters and ATGMs make a nice long-distance wake up call

Though it sounds grim, the situation is not hopeless. Missiles have weaknesses as well as strengths, and you can exploit those weaknesses. First, missiles are slow. You can sometimes evade them (your troops will do this automatically). You can also sometimes fire back quickly enough to kill or suppress the firer. Secondly missiles are bulky, and most ATGM units carry but few reloads. Thirdly, modern MBTs have frontal armor that is often impervious to missiles. And fourthly, reactive armor can often prevent an ATGM that hits from penetrating. The key, of course, is to use these weaknesses to your advantage. Keep your front forward; it puts your best armor there and helps you spot the enemy. Use an overwatch system, where one group of units covers the forward movement of another group. This way, the overwatching group might get a chance to disrupt an enemy missile launch or even destroy the offending party. Try to dupe the enemy into wasting missiles on low odds targets. Run that M1A2 out there (front first) to draw fire, and watch the missiles bounce off the composite armor. Your overwatch forces will do the rest. Of course, as many ATGMs launchers are soft targets you can also suppress them with artillery and air power; even vehicle mounted missiles lose interest in you when being pounded by 152mm shells all day long.

When using ATGMs yourself, try to avoid these things. Try firing at the flanks and rear of targets. Pick your shots, and conserve

You're outnumbered.
Your troops are exhausted.
You face an intensely fierce Persian army.
Yet you have one strength that overcomes all weakness.

You are Alexander the Great.

Coming soon:

The Great
BATTLES
# of ALEXANDER

Windows® 95 CD-ROM Game

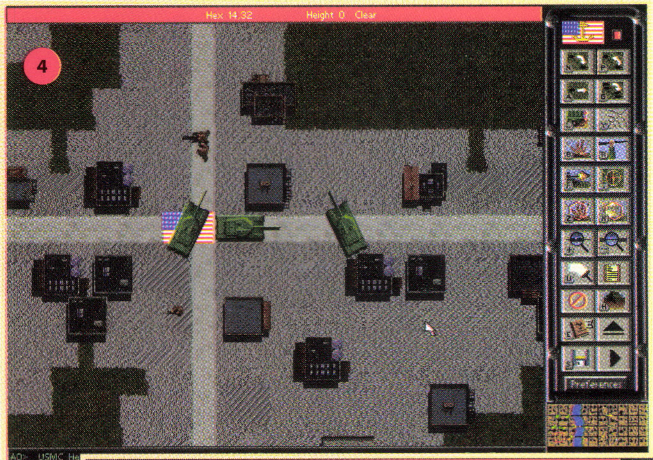
INTERACTIVE MAGIC™

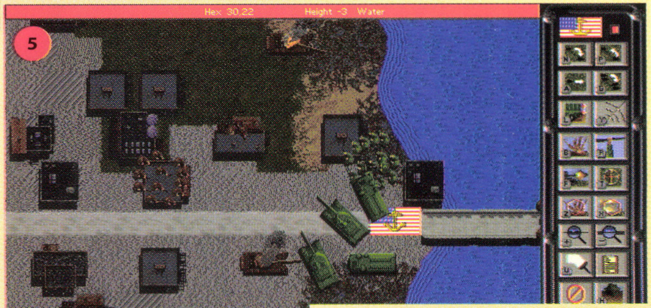
P.O. Box 13491 • Research Triangle Park • NC 27709 • www.imagicgames.com

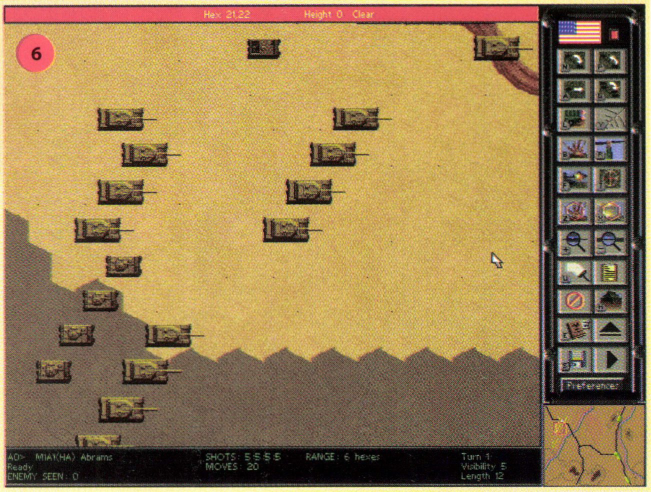
For more information call 1-800-348-5061

The Great Battles of Alexander is a trademark of Interactive Magic, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

ammo. Shoot and scoot with mobile missile systems, and don't stand toe to toe with tanks. Light mobile ATGM systems die all too easily in *SP2*; keep moving. Also keep in mind that ATGMs have a minimum range (a little piece of data oddly lacking from the *SP2* manual). This is because, for most missiles, there is a lag between launch and the time the operator can acquire and assume control of the missile; this translates into a distance in meters that varies with the sophistication of the missile. For the American Dragon II, for instance, the distance is 250 meters, or five hexes; you have to be at least six hexes away for a Dragon II unit to actually fire its missile. Some missiles have shorter dead zones (100 meters or two hexes for a TOW 2, for instance), but all missiles have them. Check the on-line encyclopedia for details before a battle starts. You will have to interlace infantry units with RPG type weapons to protect ATGMs from vehicles that get in too close. It's also a good idea with smaller ATGMs like the early Dragon and older Soviet missiles to use them against enemy missile vehicles, transports, and light armor rather than tanks. The smaller missiles are often ineffective against MBTs. Keep in mind, too, that ATGMs of all stripes make adequate anti-helicopter weapons; many a Hind has been brought to earth in *SP2* by a timely Dragon bite.







[1] **All-around defense means circle the wagons**

[2] **The M1A2 makes a good assault tank (just be careful)**

[3] **Unfortunately, you'll rarely have this much firepower to play with**

And you thought Panthers were bad news

Main battle tanks, of course, remain the core of the game. These behemoths, bigger, faster, and meaner than their WWII counterparts, are also much more expensive, meaning that for some sides (modern US in particular) you just won't have many of them sometimes. Even so, a few top of the line tanks can turn the tide of a battle, so it is essential that you understand what you are dealing with. Modern MBTs generally have large main cannons, capable of obliterating light armor and fully up to dealing with their opposite numbers. They are also heavily armored, but except in obvious mismatches (such as M1A2 Abrams against export model T-55s or the like), most MBTs are vulnerable to their peers. This is the one aspect of *SP2* most like WWII: evenly matched tanks still have to maneuver for flank and rear shots, and mobility kills are still the cheapest way to take an opponent out of the fight. What this means for you is you can't assume your modern war chariot is invulnerable; you have to play to its strengths and play down its vulnerabilities.

The best way to kill tanks is with airpower, followed by long range missiles from helicopters; this minimizes the ability of the enemy to shoot back. The surest way to kill the enemy is to engage with you own (preferably superior) MBTs, but this of course exposes you to losses. Using infantry close assaults is not recommended except in dire circumstances; use your RPGs from a distance instead, and bring up ATGMs for support. Tank duels are usually very short in *SP2*. In many cases, seeing equals hitting equals killing. Tanks should be high priority targets—kill them first. The only real exception is if you are facing an enemy whose tanks are inferior but whose missiles are capable of killing your units at a distance. In that case, the ATGMs take precedence. Most of the time, though, enemy MBTs should get primary attention. Anything can kill a BMP, but sometimes your ability to kill T-80s is limited. Your tanks should kill any enemy tanks they see, and leave the light armor to infantry missiles if available.

In facing enemy tanks, the best thing to do is be on the defensive: hide and fire first from cover. You will often be able to kill the enemy before they can respond. It is much more difficult to be on the attack. As you move, you are likely to suffer multiple hits from assailants who stubbornly remain invisible. Even overwatching forces often cannot see these demon defenders.

Still, you will have to attack at some point. Smoke helps, until thermal imaging becomes available. There really is no substitute for recon work. Helicopters are best, but ground recon is also essential. Low cost—let's face it, expendable—support units work best. Jeeps, light armor, and the like, preferably with accompanying soldiers, can draw fire, spot the enemy, and maybe even survive.

Tanks, then, are powerful units that have to be employed carefully. Infantry can be deadly, especially to older tanks, but except in built up areas where surprise is likely and the laws of probability make dueling with grunts dangerous, you can pretty safely use MBTs to suppress and then assault exposed infantry. Unlike in *SP*, it's actually better *not* to have infantry on board if you are playing with late model tanks; the grunts just die, and the enemy anti-armor weapons are not likely to hurt an M1. And assaulting most ATGMs is quite safe; get inside their minimum range, and you're home free. Close assaults are much more problematic with light armor; stick to blasting away from a distance with Bradleys, BMPs, and the like. ■

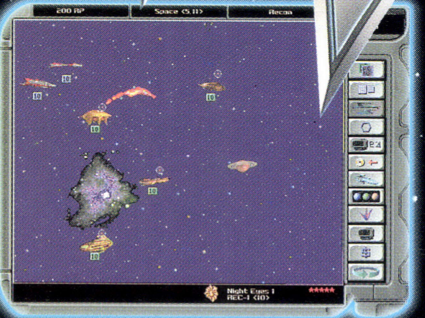
STAR GENERAL™

The Sky Is No Longer The Limit.

Go where no gamer has gone before – BEYOND PANZER GENERAL™. Volume 4 in SSI's award-winning 5-STAR SERIES,™ STAR GENERAL™ is light-years ahead of its proud ancestor!

5-STAR SERIES™

Feel the power of an incredibly enhanced PANZER GENERAL game engine. A Two-Level Combat System that accommodates space combat AND surface combat. Resource management – conquer enemy planets and develop them for your needs. See the beauty of over 90 fully rendered 3D starships, 100+ ground units and multiple planet types. Command a multi-planetary force as you struggle to repel the advances of six alien races. Engage in a variety of wars as any of 7 different races. And be prepared to put in some time! The scope of STAR GENERAL is as vast as space itself – with well over 100 hours of game play. The sky is no longer the limit. So light up the heavens in a cosmic battle for the right to be called STAR GENERAL!



MULTI-PLAYER OPTION FOR WINDOWS 95!

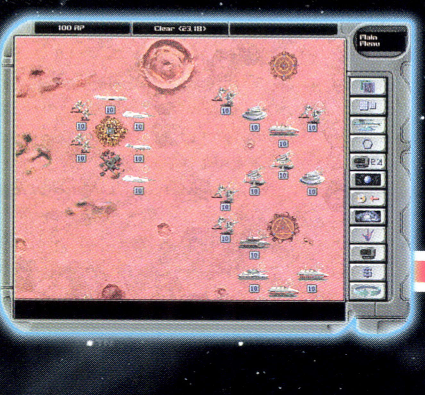
Combo CD-ROM
WINDOWS® 95 & DOS

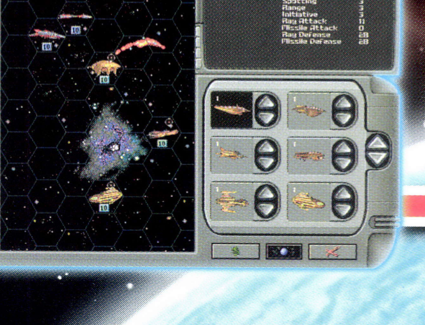
www.stargeneral.com

TO ORDER: Visit your retailer or call 1-800-601-PLAY.

KIDS TO ADULTS
K-A
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

STAR GENERAL is a trademark of Strategic Simulations, Inc., a Mindscape Company. ©1996 Strategic Simulations, Inc. All rights reserved. Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corp. Developed by Catware.




Purchase adjacent to Orbital Platform

Cost 184
Battleship
Tech Level 1
AP 200

Weasel 1

Max Ammo	12
Max Fuel	40
Movement	4
Spotting	3
Range	3
Initiative	3
Ray Attack	11
Missile Attack	0
Ray Defense	28
Missile Defense	28

SSI®
A MINDSCAPE® COMPANY

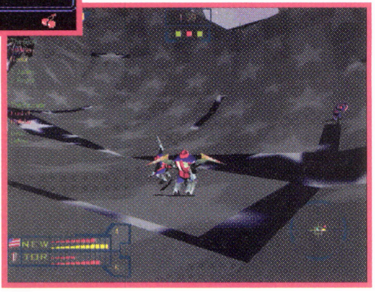
by Steve Bauman

Cheat Thrills

Why is my game so mind-numbingly stupid?

When was the last time a computer-controlled opponent surprised you? Artificial intelligence, or AI, is being neglected in modern games. Computer-controlled characters are typically dumb as dirt, following a single attack strategy and never doing anything surprising. In a number of cases, game designers give characters more "life" points instead of giving them a brain. If it takes more shots to bring him down, you'll think it was a better baddie.

▲ The legendary Pac Man. Now that's AI



▶ The repetitive AI turns a superb game into an average one

Hogwash, says I. Designers are taking the easy way out. Many years ago (1982?), I wrote a game for the Atari 800 that was a "cross the screen alive" sort of thing (creatively called *To the Top*). I designed a bunch of different pieces, each with its own simple AI. The game was an, I think, 20x20 grid, and you could move in any of eight directions, one grid at a time. Some of the pieces could only move horizontally, some vertically, some diagonally, some randomly, and all would chase you. It was simple, but it got pretty hard pretty fast. The AI was basically non-existent (the computer wouldn't anticipate your moves and learn from your previous ones), but it's basically the same routines most current games use; locate player and then attack in a direct path. I made my millions (not), bought a PC and never wrote another game (well, there is that text adventure game in 1993, but that's another story…).

AI is one area where you can't just say, "Well, it used to be better in the good old days." That's not true, mostly due to the large RAM overhead complex AI routines generate. How much AI could be put into a game which ran in 16K of RAM? Sometimes it *appeared* the games had better AI, because the games were simpler, and a simple game can have a better AI because it has fewer things to consider. The ghosts in *Pac-Man*, for example, had pre-determined routes that once learned allowed the gamer to completely dominate the game.

When I reviewed *HyperBlade* last month, I made a lot of comments about the clunky AI. Let's look at one of its main problems; the goalie AI. Somewhere in the development of the game, the designers decided it needed to be more "action" oriented, so they added all of the blood and gore. They also made the opposing players more aggressive, in particular the goalies. In making them more aggressive, they made the game easy. If you want to score, lure the goalie away from the goal with your teammate (just follow slightly behind and off to the side of him), and as the goalie attacks your teammate, fire away. You'll score at least 60% of the time. The obvious flaw here is that the goalie is attacking someone who doesn't have the rok (the ball, in *HyperBlade*'s fiction).

If you've played enough sports games, it's clear the way the game should have worked. The goalie should be able to see the player with the rok and attack only that player, ignoring the other. The player's strategy would then be to lure the goalie with the rok-carrying player, passing it off to the teammate, who would then have to attempt to score.

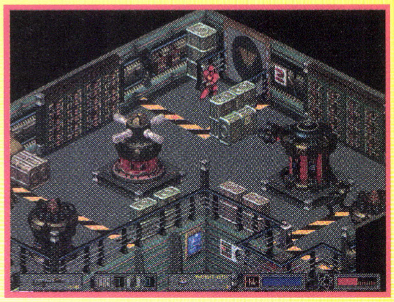
What would take the game to the next level would be a goalie that remembers this particular strategy and begins to guess what you're going to do next. Much like a soccer goalie when faced with a free kick has to guess whether or not the player is going to kick right, left, high or low (if he gets it right, he blocks the shot or looks foolish going in the wrong direction), the goalie would guess which player is going to attack based on past player attacks. Wouldn't it be a surprise if, right as you passed to your teammate, the goalie suddenly switched over to that player, anticipating your move, and stole the pass? It's that sense of surprise which is lacking in most games.

This, of course, will continue to get worse before it gets better, due to the "online crutch." That's where you say, "Well, it's not much of a single player game, but lemme tellya, in multiplayer, it rocks…" What happens, though, when every game is multiplayer? What will differentiate Game X from Game Y? I think it'll be the few which have superb solo play, allowing you to train offline, and also which allow a mixture of human and credible computer opponents.

Won't it be a better gaming experience when there can be computer-controlled players which learn and allow, say, 16-player deathmatches (or whatever), using only four actual humans? Imagine if you couldn't tell if you were playing humans or computer-controlled characters…

So c'mon designers, there must be something you can do with a Pentium and 16 MB of RAM beyond pushing more pixels across the screen. Let's make some smart games. ■

Cheater



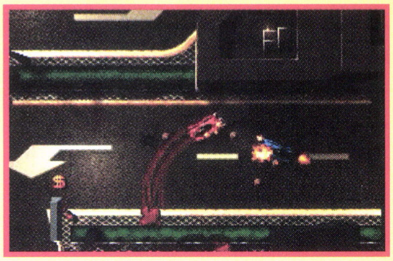
Crusader: No Regret

Use these command line switches:

-warp #	Warp to level #
-skill #	Change skill level to #

Once in the game:

LOOSECANNON16	Enable Cheats
<CTRL-F10>	Enable Immortality
<F10>	Max weapons, energy and all items



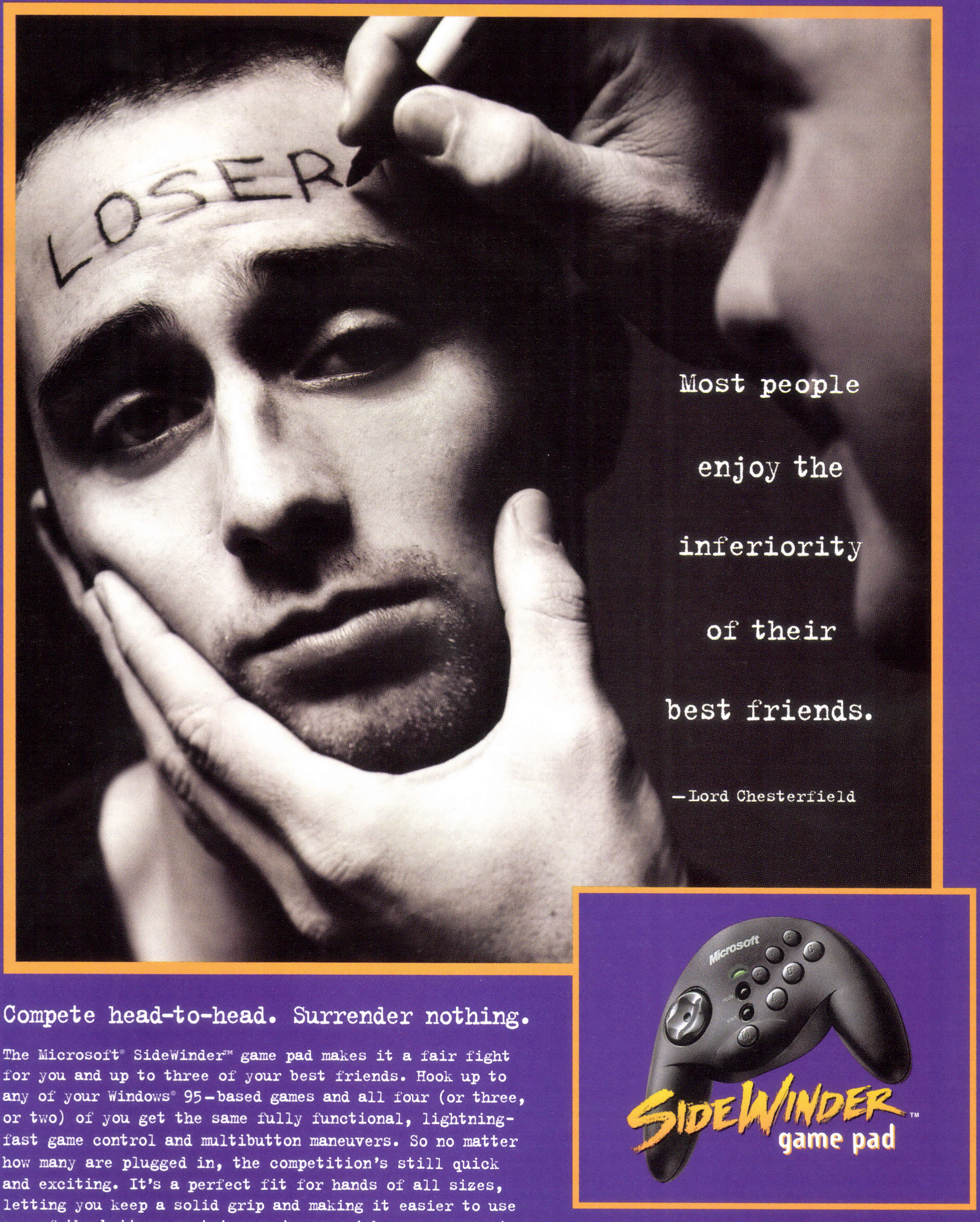
Death Rally

Type these codes during a race:

DRUB	Invulnerable
DREAD	Unlimited ammo
DRAG	Unlimited turbo

Type these at any menu:

DROOL	$500,000
DRAW	$1,000
DROP	Lose 10 points
DRIVE	Get 10 points



Most people
enjoy the
inferiority
of their
best friends.

—Lord Chesterfield

SideWinder™ game pad

Compete head-to-head. Surrender nothing.

The Microsoft® SideWinder™ game pad makes it a fair fight for you and up to three of your best friends. Hook up to any of your Windows® 95-based games and all four (or three, or two) of you get the same fully functional, lightning-fast game control and multibutton maneuvers. So no matter how many are plugged in, the competition's still quick and exciting. It's a perfect fit for hands of all sizes, letting you keep a solid grip and making it easier to use any of the buttons or triggers to vanquish your opponents. Record complicated, hard-to-remember multibutton moves and map them to a single button for swift execution of lethal maneuvers. Remember, the more SideWinder game pads you own, the more friends you can take advantage of. A little friendly competition never hurt anyone, right?

Microsoft

Where do you want to go today?® www.microsoft.com/sidewinder/

©1996 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, *Where do you want to go today?* and Windows are registered trademarks and SideWinder is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation.

Hail to the queen, baby

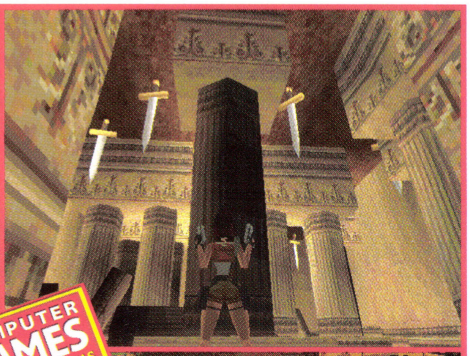
Tomb Raider
Eidos Interactive
DOS
★★★★★

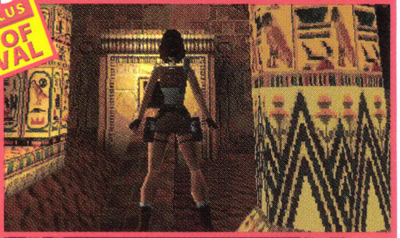
It had to happen. After all the pretenders and imitators, *some* game had to take the 3D action game to the next level, before the genre drowned itself in a pool of derivative mediocrity. *Duke Nukem 3D* didn't do it; it was merely an evolutionary advance over *Doom*, with identical gameplay refined and polished to the point where it appeared fresh and innovative. *Quake* took the technology to the next level, but the gameplay stayed in *Doom*-land. *Super Mario64* for the Nintendo 64 showed what could be done with superb design and technology, but it's a bit too cutesy for anyone above the age of 10 (and not a PC game).

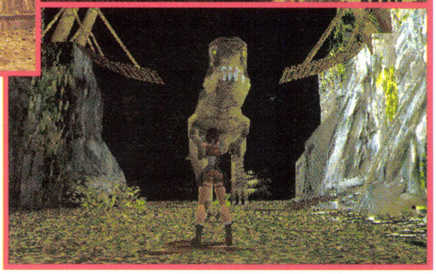
Who would've guessed that the previously unheralded Core Design would produce the game to lead us into the future of 3D gaming? That future is represented by *Tomb Raider*, the hands down best 3D action/adventure of the year, and a contender for best overall game of the year. It's not a perfect game, but it mixes gameplay elements from multiple genres with ease, and points to the future of 3D game design.

The premise is simple enough. You control Lara Croft – socialite, adventurer, sports-bra model – as she tries to recover some artifacts from tombs around the world. The thinnest thread of a story ties it all together, but you'll tend to forget the plot when you're dangling from a ledge a few stories high; this game delivers more drama and danger than any movie could, since you're actually controlling the action as it unfolds in front of you.

Lara makes for a smashing action game hero, a sort of Indiana Jane. She's a hero who gets out of bed each morning and wonders what daring exploits to engage in today. The third-person 3D viewpoint puts more of an emphasis on character and animation, and the designers have given her the grace of a gymnast and the strength of a bodybuilder. The animation is at times breathtaking in its grace and beauty. Marvel as she makes perfect swan dives into pools of water, does back flips while firing at various denizens of the tombs and makes leaps of faith to faraway crumbling platforms, holding on with only the tips of her fingers. Even Chow Yun Fat in a thousand John Woo movies couldn't pull these moves off. The keyboard control scheme takes some getting used to, and can be cumbersome initially, but ultimately provides superb control for the seemingly endless number of moves Lara can do.







COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL

Clockwise from center: Our hero Lara slays the King of the Jungle. Check out the amazing architecture; Levels like this just make you want to look around and be awed; In this room you have to watch for falling daggers. Puzzles and traps abound; The texturing on this level really gives you the feeling of being in an old tomb; Lara comes up again a surprise guest in the "Lost Valley" level. What you'll want to do here is run back to the area where you entered and hop up to a higher level. You can get a clean shot and off Mr. Dinosaur

Lara blazes the feminist gaming trail set by such luminaries as Ms. Pac-Man; it's too bad the male designers chose to give Lara the gravity-defying chest of Pamela Anderson after her fourth set of breast implants (she could put out an eye with those things). While initial response suggests men are more than happy to cross-dress as a woman protagonist, women may be put off by this reinforcement of the Barbie physique stereotype.

As wonderful as Lara is, the game would be another exercise in character marketing over gameplay (hello *Crash Bandicoot*) if it weren't for the level design. Never before have you experienced a better sense of "I can't wait to see what lies around the corner" than you'll find in this game. On the third level, the "Lost Valley," you'll literally jump out of your shoes when you encounter a surprise inhabitant. The levels are massive (a map feature would have been appreciated), and full of nooks and crannies to explore. The secret areas aren't found by running along walls trying to find secret panels; instead, you'll find them by exploring the fringes of a level, looking for caves only accessible by insane leaps or weird combinations of jumping and climbing. The level design so immerses you in the game world that you may find yourself running around your house or apartment doing back flips while looking for hand grips so you can scale your walls.

Where *Tomb Raider* differs from other games of its type is in the fact that there are actual puzzles to solve, even if most are still of the "find the key to open the door" variety. You'll also spend a lot of time experimenting in rooms with different action techniques, looking for cracks in the walls you can use to climb with, and generally throwing your body around in all directions, hoping you'll stick to something.

This is fun for one, as there's no multiplayer play at all (appropriate for a game which is predominantly exploratory), and those testosterone-addled teens who get off on graphic violence and body count will be disappointed by the gratuitous lack of both of them. This doesn't imply there's a lack of action; on the contrary, each of the 15 levels can take hours (maybe even days) to figure out, and all are full of death-defying leaps and mind-boggling stunts.

Who won't like this game? Let's start with PETA activists, because your main targets in the game are wild animals (how they managed to get into these sealed tombs is another story). The levels are full of wolves, lions and apes, and killing them in their natural habitat (remember, you're invading their territory) is a bit disturbing. Where are those Nazis when you need them?

Purists of perfect 3D will find a large number of holes in the 3D engine. Contrary to early reports, it's not better than the one found in *Quake*. It breaks up a lot, polygons will occasionally disappear, there's a lot of bitmap tearing and clipping problems (Lara will often appear to be one with a door or ledge). A high resolution mode is present, but few machines can handle it (the game didn't ship with promised 3D card support, which is only a criticism for those who currently own one of the supported cards).

You could make an argument that the underrated *Fade to Black* blazed this trail almost two years ago, and it's not hard to wish that someone would actually throw a compelling story into the mix, but neither of those things keep *Tomb Raider* from being anything but an unqualified success. Without the lure of multiplayer compensating for sloppy or uninspired design, it focuses on what has always made games great: gameplay which delivers a roller-coaster ride of thrills, spills and chills. – *Steve Bauman*

Duke Nukem 3D Atomic Edition/Plutonium Pack

3D Realms

DOS

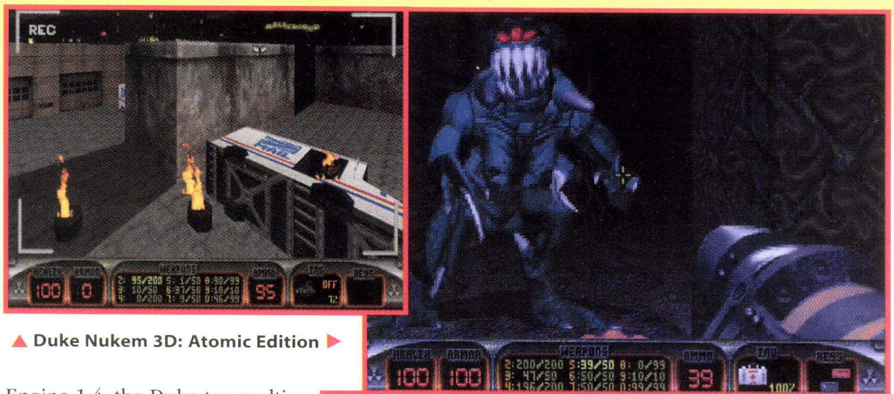
★★★☆☆

Well, the Duke's back for an official encore presentation. Available in two flavors, the *Plutonium Pack* add-on for the original or the full fledged *Atomic Edition*, both come with *Duke Nukem 3D* version 1.4 and a new episode, titled "The Birth." It takes you through another 11 action packed levels which serve to remind us why the original was so good to begin with. *Duke Nukem* was and is a much more interactive game than *Quake*, and a lot of these levels serve to illustrate that fact.

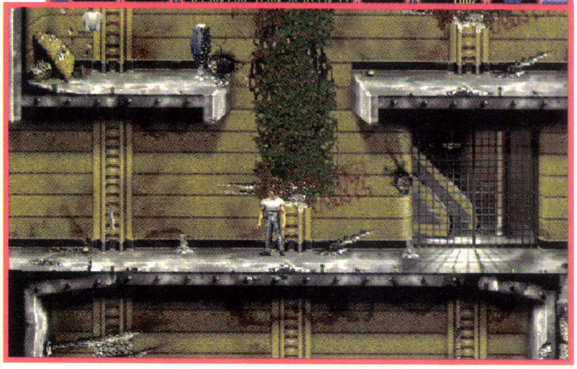
Duke's latest mission has him doing what he does best: stomping alien butt through a variety of zones which pay homage to (or is that rip-off?) such movies as *Mission: Impossible*, *Aliens*, *Independence Day* and other icons of popular culture (including the Postal Service and the DukeBurger joints; the latter literally serves dog food). Oddly, however, there is a conspicuous lack of, well, babes in this new episode, despite such level names as "Babeland" and "XXXStacy." Since the *Plutonium Pack* has stiff [*ooh, bad pun. -ed*] competition between third party add-on CDs and the tons of extra levels on the net, 3D Realms has made this official mission disk the only way to get the 1.4 upgrade.

These levels also carry more weight since they were actually created by the guys at 3D Realms. The levels are pretty good too, and show some very keen use of the Build engine's ability to create levels over levels. The downside of upgrading however seems to be that version 1.4 is not compatible with the previous version 1.3 for multiplayer games (this was tried numerous times over the Internet to no avail).

Also included with this pack is the official *Duke Nukem* screen saver, jig saw puzzles and desktop themes, and, as part of the Build Engine 1.4, the Duke tag multiplayer game, wherein you and your fellow Dukers try to tag certain parts of their opponent's side of the level all the while blowing up enemy teammates and avoiding getting yourself blown up in the process. There are a couple of new monsters (including a devilishly tough Alien-lookalike), a new Alien Queen end boss whom you'll face in an underwater lair, and plenty of new textures and landscapes (including, finally, those darkly ominous skys that *Doom* and *Quake* have). Only one new weapon is included, the Microwave Expander, which makes the enemy grow then explode into a gory mess. The levels seem a bit more puzzle based and there are even a number of devious, inescapable traps to be found. New opening and endgame cut scenes, and a lot of new Duke phrases have been added as well.



▲ Duke Nukem 3D: Atomic Edition ▶



▲ Hunter Hunted

This upgrade should be appealing to those who enjoy using the Build editor because of the new textures and weather effects. Overall, these levels are solid and very tough, though the original levels were, on the whole, decidedly better. Suffice to say, if you're a Duke fan, then you'll probably want to pick up the *Plutonium Pack*. – *Jason D'Aprile*

Hunter Hunted

Sierra

Windows 95

★★★☆☆

Sierra's made a conservative re-entry into the action game genre with the release of *Hunter Hunted*, an old fashioned 2D side-scrolling platform game. While they've been down this road before, with games like the oldie *Jawbreaker* and the best forgotten *Thexder 95*, *Hunter Hunted* comes from their new kaa division, a spinoff from Dynamix. While *Hunter Hunted* shows a lot of sure-handed gameplay and attention to detail, it ultimately is unable to transcend the genre and lacks the crucial multiplayer features and level building utilities that could make it a cult favorite a la *Abuse*.

The game ships with a generous 100 levels, some multiplayer specific, most featuring the usual "find key X to open door Y to proceed to the next level" sort of gameplay. Some levels pit you against another inhabitant, which is where the game takes on a minor fighting game angle, as you either hunt your computer (or human) opponent, or are the hunted (sounds like a good name for a game). The graphics are excellent and highly detailed (with one caveat mentioned below), but the game annoyingly pauses every time the CD-audio switches tracks (which happens at the start of every level).

The gameplay is typical run, jump and kill from the usual side view. The main view of your character also zooms in and out depending on the location (and your proximity to objects in the gameworld). It's exciting to watch, but once again a technical doo-dad has come at the expense of actual gameplay. The characters are small to begin with, but when they zoom out they get so tiny that controlling them becomes even more difficult. One of the best features of the game is the excellent tutorial. The first 20 levels (which you can skip) each have simple goals that introduce every feature of the game one at a time.

Unfortunately, the multiplayer play is lacking, featuring a machine-straining split-screen mode. This is not a popular option; PC hardware limitations really necessitate network and multiplayer play. Oh well, maybe we'll see it in the inevitable *Hunter Hunted 2*. – *Steve Bauman*

CyberGladiators

Sierra

Windows 95

★★☆☆☆

Just as the recipe for great cookies spans the core ingredients of sugar, flour, and butter, the recipe for a great fighting game dictates special moves, gratifying death throes of opponents and a soundtrack that sets most pacemakers on stun. *CyberGladiators*, from Sierra On-Line's new kaa division, may not win the blue ribbon at the fair, but it doesn't belong at the nurse's station, either.

Building on a foundation of highly detailed polygon warriors, this post-apocalyptic game tickles the adrenal glands into a feeding frenzy, thanks to a vast repertoire of punching, kicking, slamming, slobbering and severing. One of the welcome differences between this and other fighting games are the additional dangers each arena houses, in the form of flying spears, barrels, and crates. All can be used to your advantage, but are just as accessible to your opponent, who will gladly turn your gladiator into a ten ton lava lamp.

Combat is fast and furious, despite the somewhat sluggish response from your on-screen character (with a 3Dfx-based card, however – supported directly in Win95 with Direct3D – frame rate ramps up to 60fps, rivaling the fastest arcade fighters out there). Multiple moves are tough to time correctly. When they do occur, the results are no better than a swift series of single moves. In a lethal mistake that plummets *CyberGladiators* right out of the arena, most characters have one specific move which, if repeated in rapid succession, will defeat almost any foe. Once found, that special move opens the gate for a rapid ascension through the ranks to certain victory. The game touts "enemies that learn your fighting style." It's obvious these guys are playing hooky.

Start off with an appetizer of *Mortal Kombat*. Fill your plate with two or three of the current fighting games on the market. Then, dish up the main course of *Virtua Fighter 2*. If you're a good kid, and finish up your plate, you can have *CyberGladiators* for dessert. By then, though, you just might be too full. – *Tim Royal*

Grid Runner

Virgin Interactive Entertainment

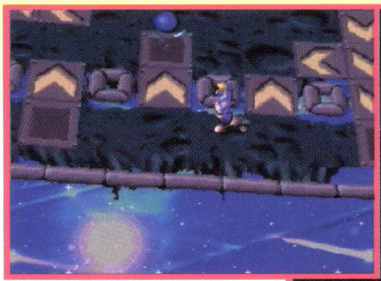
Windows 95

★★★☆☆

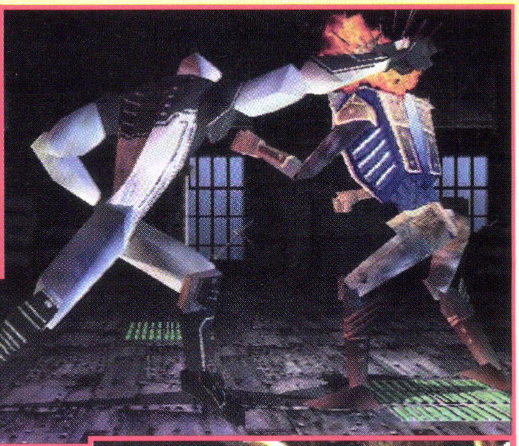
A cross between the classic street games Tag and Capture the Flag (which is also a summer camp game — the winner becoming exempt from singing Kumbaya that night), this deceptively simple game originally debuted as *Eurit*. "Tag! *Eurit*!" Get it? Perhaps not enough of us did, since it obviously warranted a Slick New Title®.

You are Axxel, a freelance explorer who is investigating strange occurrences in the once safe Gridonian Asteroid Field, where ships have recently begun disappearing. You and your good friend Tara reach the site and notice a deserted ship. Leaving Tara at the controls (the macho way to go), you disembark and enter the other vessel. Surprise. It's an underworld of many levels, ruled by the evil Empress Vorga. And before long… you're It.

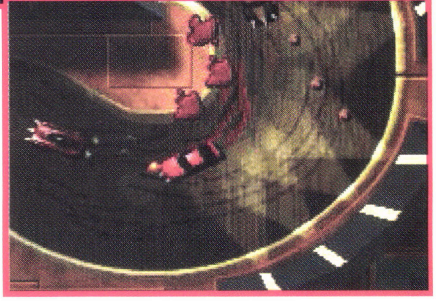
The game structure is simple: we have multiple levels, each of which is ruled by one of Vorga's warriors, who sport warrior-like names such as Krosh or Minox (action game warriors are never named Bruce or Ann-Marie). The levels are grids full of flags, traps and the usual power-ups and bonuses. Each level (three of which comprise each of 15 "Stages") has a predetermined number of flags, which must be captured to win the level. The first player to reach a flag captures it, and the other player is then "It." Whoever is It must chase and tag the flag-capturer, and the roles are then reversed. The first to procure the required number of flags wins the level. Use of weapons and magical spells enhances your ability to gain control. Simple? Sure, the first five or six stages are child's play… then the fun begins.



▲ Grid Runner



CyberGladiators ▶



Death Rally ▶

The upper stages are not easy–more aggressive opponents, new traps and peculiar physical phenomena pose ever-mounting obstacles; and new tricks appear at every turn. Increasingly fast-paced, the game can become highly addictive, and two-player mode adds that "Gotcha" factor. Although its addictiveness is a very important element, *Grid Runner*'s primitive graphical quality pales in comparison to some of the competition. The monsters are hokey, and players looking for highly intricate settings with *Descent*-quality 3D mapping might be disappointed. Nonetheless, addictive it is–and for most, that will be the whole point. – *Cindy Yans*

Death Rally

Apogee

DOS

★★★☆☆

If only someone would come up with an original idea for a racing game. Here's a perfect example of a game that does everything exactly the way you would expect. You have races. You get powerups. You win money. You upgrade your car. Repeat cycle until you're either sick of the game or move on to the next game that offers all the same features.

First, let's give credit where credit's due. *Death Rally* does offer excellent playability, despite its religious devotion to all of the boring conventions arcade games seem to be stuck in. It's all very silly, but it all works supremely well.

The view of the race is overhead, and you can arm your vehicle with weapons to take out the opposing drivers. Special missions can be offered for extra cash; they range from picking up track-side drugs to wiping out a fellow driver. There are six vehicles to choose from and 18 tracks, which are too small to be particularly distinctive (it's pretty tough to tell a lot of the tracks apart). Four player network and two player modem play is supported, and it's proving to be quite popular on Kali.

Special cross-marketing credit must be given for having "Duke Nukem" as one of the opposing drivers. If he wins a race, you get a "Hail to the King, baby," which must make all of the little kiddies giggle with delight. You can "Race Against Duke Nukem" (as the box says), but he's just another anonymous driver, just as this is another anonymous game. Next. – *Steve Bauman*

Neo Hunter

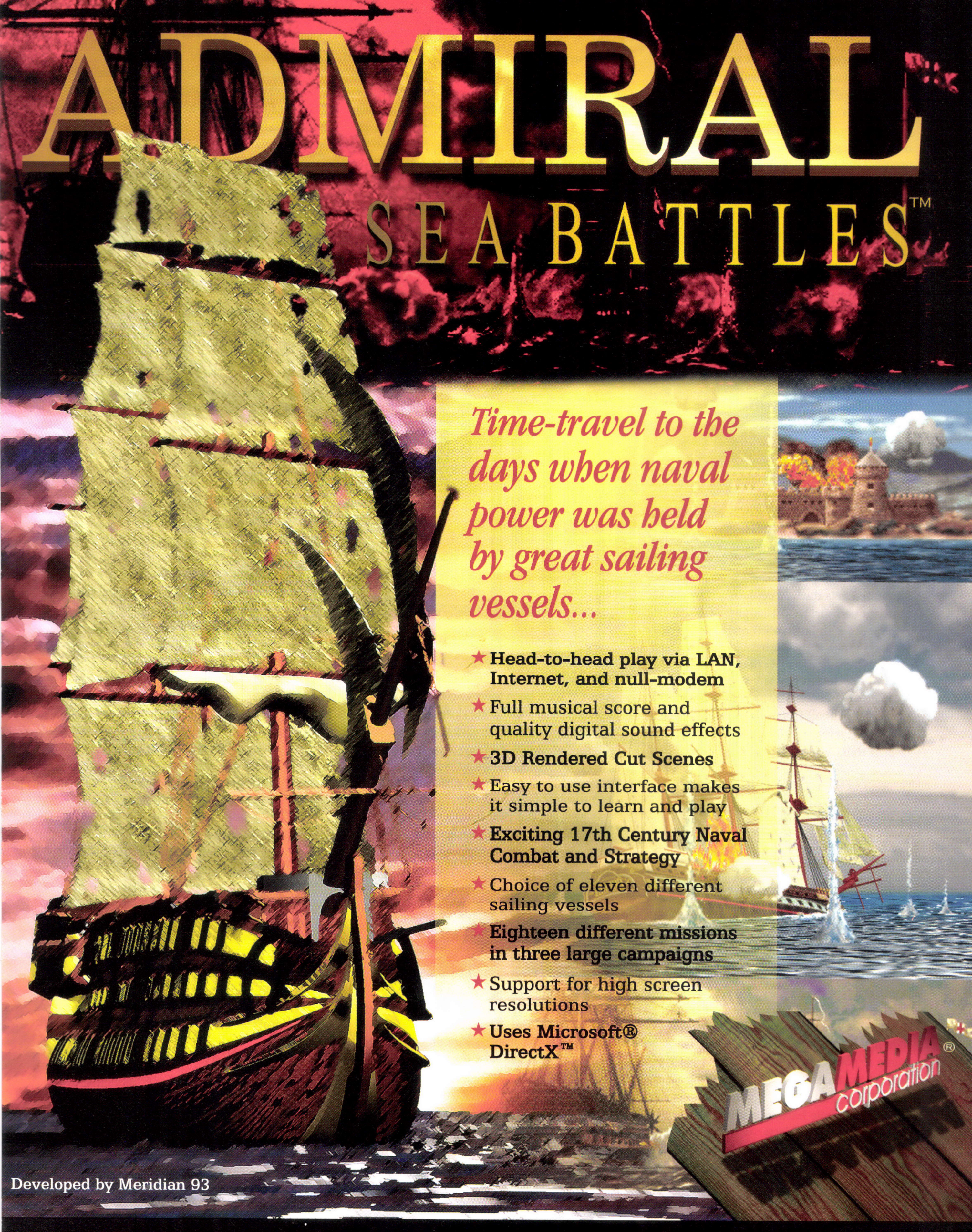
Virgin Interactive Entertainment

DOS, Windows 95

★⯨☆☆☆

If you've been waiting for an opportunity to buy a new game to make sure the plain vanilla VGA mode of your graphics card works, here it is. It's probably one of the last of the die-hard VGA games. It looks terrible.

If looks don't matter to you, though, – find a different game to play anyway. This is shooting gallery gaming at its absolute worst, with all sorts of folderol overhead you have to wade through to get to the main action of the game. Way too much time and energy must be spent choosing missions through an elaborate game-within-the-game pattern



ADMIRAL

SEA BATTLES™

Time-travel to the days when naval power was held by great sailing vessels...

- ★ **Head-to-head play via LAN, Internet, and null-modem**
- ★ Full musical score and quality digital sound effects
- ★ **3D Rendered Cut Scenes**
- ★ Easy to use interface makes it simple to learn and play
- ★ **Exciting 17th Century Naval Combat and Strategy**
- ★ Choice of eleven different sailing vessels
- ★ **Eighteen different missions in three large campaigns**
- ★ Support for high screen resolutions
- ★ **Uses Microsoft® DirectX™**

MEGAMEDIA® corporation

Developed by Meridian 93

For more info:
1.800.634.2633 / 1.510.623.1100

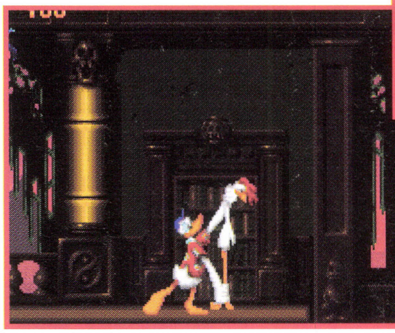
Free Playable Demo:
www.megamed.com

matching system, ostensibly to flesh out the you-are-a-bounty-hunter-and-detective fiction, but really to give you something to distract you from the terrible game play.

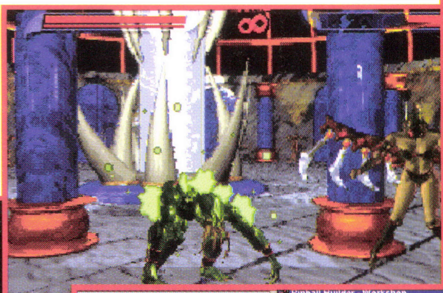
What's so terrible about it? It's been done a million times before, and has looked much prettier, and has been done more subtly. If a target is shot and it's behind a window, you should see that window glass at *least* get a bullet hole in it; if there's a sustained fire-fight between you and an opponent, there should be *some* collateral damage as a result. None of that happens here. At least the quantity and variety of opponents improves a little over time; but just a little. Any fiction-making attempted gets quickly demolished by the fact that you can survive onslaughts of 20-30 opponents with little or no real damage to yourself (your weapons may overheat a bit).

Looking more like *Wetlands* than anything else, but without even any of that game's wonderful cut-scene cartoon animation, this one's just a small step away from being a shareware release – and not a very attractive one, at that. – *Steve Wartofsky*

▼ Cold Shadow



Pray for Death ▶



Pinball Builder

21st Century Entertainment

Windows

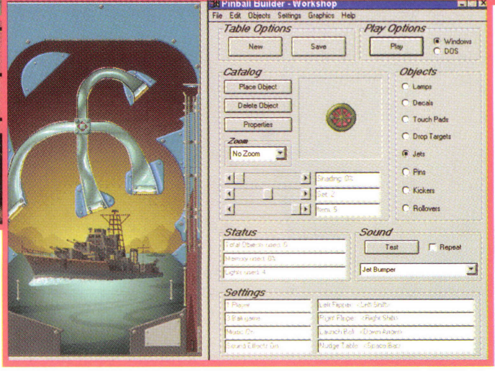
★★★⯪☆

People who've been gaming since the days of the 8-bit machines like the Atari 800 have probably at least heard of, if not played with for hours, Electronic Arts' *Pinball Construction Set*. Not only was it a great little pinball game, but it was the seminal product in the "build your own game" category. *Pinball Builder* from 21st Century is a modern-day *PCS*, aiming directly for the hearts and minds of those who love pinball or love to fiddle without programming; in some ways it surpasses the old classic, but in others it falls far short.

If *PCS* was a toolkit, *Pinball Builder* is almost the whole hardware store. While only six types of active objects are available (touch pads, jets, kickers, etc.), a huge number of different objects are present for each type, and you can even add new variants to the libraries. Hard-core pinball players will delight in the many modifiable properties objects can have: scores, bonuses, lamp connections, etc. Many sounds and graphic decals are available, or you can import your own. Once you've learned the interface, choosing and placing objects is relatively easy (although drag and drop of already placed items isn't directly supported).

Once designed, games can be played either in Windows or DOS; Windows mode doesn't involve switching, but DOS mode (which runs easily from Window 95) provides some more pinball-like displays, and may also be faster on older processors. A game recorder is included so you can play back your best games; it would have been more useful if you could restart play at some point during playback.

◀ Pinball Builder



The big flaw in the package has to do with the limitations placed on your designs. There are eight basic table designs (with four variants each); no designing your own ramps and tunnels (*i.e.*, basic structures) here! This was perhaps the best feature of *PCS*, and it's incredible *Pinball Builder* doesn't emulate it. Even worse, on the tables you are given, you're usually limited as to where you can place most objects; for example, most bumpers can only be placed in the lower part of the table in a narrow area. True, there may be technical reasons for this, but it's frustrating nonetheless.

All-in-all, *Pinball Builder* is more like "Pinball Remodeller" (This Old Pinball Table?); there's quite a bit an avid tinkerer can do within the basic structure, but don't expect to be building something completely new. – *Scott Udell*

Cold Shadow

Disney Interactive

Windows

★★★⯪☆

What happens when you mesh the lighthearted warmth of Walt Disney with the ultra-violent and hopelessly outdated *Teenage Mutant Ninja Termites*? You get Maui Mallard starring in his latest adventure, *Cold Shadow*.

Working with an already extensive line of kids and adult kids software, the designers at Disney found a new hero to rally around. Maui Mallard's quest involves returning the mysterious Shabuhm Shabuhm idol to a powerful shaman guarding the island. In typical side-scrolling fashion, Maui jumps, ducks (sorry), and wields his weapons across a variety of locations, ranging from mansions to dark jungles. No location is so much like the others the feeling of redundancy sets in.

28
X5
CG-07
CG-07

▲ Neo Hunter

Behind a flawless soundtrack of reggae rhythms, *Cold Shadow* gets under the skin in short order. It's the kind of game you swear to play for a couple minutes, then discover that aliens have stolen an entire hour or two of your time while you played those few minutes.

Not satisfied with being another typical side-scroller, the game adds neat surprises, like Maui's ability to turn into a ninja duck, complete with advanced whipping abilities. Populating the levels are all manner of unique and comical villains ready to feed that need to quack a few heads.

If there's anything to complain about, it would rest in the fact that everything in the game has been done before. Many times before, actually. The vintage graphics (i.e. VGA) aren't up to speed with the current standards, either.

Don't be fooled, however. *Duck Nukem,* er… *Cold Shadow* is a fantastic, fun, heartwarming game which will entertain kids of all ages. The Shadow may know what evil lurks in the hearts of men, but *Cold Shadow* knows what lurks in the heart of making an entertaining game. – *Tim Royal*

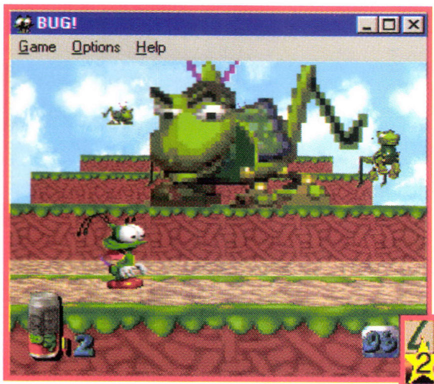
Pray for Death

Virgin Interactive Entertainment

DOS

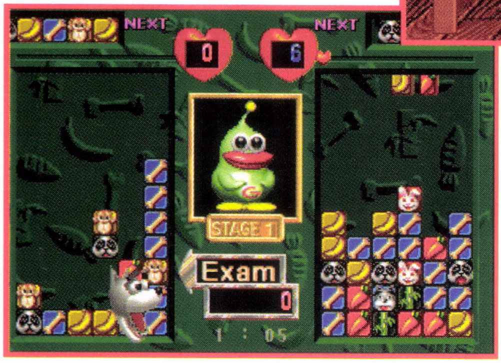
★★⯪☆☆

You have to wonder about the motivation to create a product whose sole existence is to rip off another well established title. Ah yes, money, that frequently spoke of but seldom seen thing writers tend to find themselves dreaming of acquiring someday … Anyway, *Pray for Death* is a straightforward 2D fighting game with rendered characters (as seen in *Killer Instinct*) and play controls somewhere between that game and *Mortal Kombat*, which is something like saying someplace between trivial and mediocre, but works well enough for millions of arcade hounding boys, so why complain?



◀ **Bug!**

As far as PC fighting games go, however, *Pray for Death*, despite its clone-like nature, is decent. The eight characters (including a killer military robot) all vying for a second chance at life are fairly interesting, the bosses, Death himself, and Pain, a vicious sub-boss, are neat, and playability is fair as well. The game is tough, and control is sometimes jerky. The ease of performing special moves (and even regular moves) will likely depend entirely upon your control pad (don't even bother the keyboard.



◀ **Baku-Baku**

The game has minimal zooming in and out, and the graphics, while good, are all a bit on the fuzzy, pixellated side. The rendered fighting arenas look good and the characters are mildly diverse, but the fighters seem a bit stilted, making them seem more animatronic than animated. Possibly the best thing about *Pray for Death*, oddly enough, is the great soundtrack. The ambient musical tracks in the game seem almost too good for an otherwise very average fighting game.

Pray for Death has a moodier and darker feel than Apogee's *Xenophage*, an all humanoid cast, and is mildly more story driven (very mildly). It's an okay game, falls well short of the quality seen in the current crop of 2D fighters in the arcade and on the consoles. Not bad, but certainly nothing great. – *Jason D'Aprile*

Toy Story

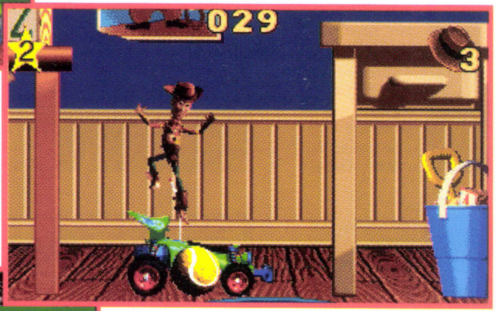
Disney Interactive

Windows

★★½☆☆

From Disney's "Power Play" line of PC action games, *Toy Story* is a direct port of the 16-bit Sega Genesis platform game. On that moribund platform, it was the last of the great run and jump games, a final release which showcased everything the Genesis was capable of. While the graphics and animation were astonishingly good (for the Genesis), its gameplay was still eclipsed by a classic like *Earthworm Jim*.

On the PC, *Toy Story* is less successful, if only because the standards of the PC are a wee-bit higher (ports, however good the source, are somewhat doomed when the new platform is not taken advantage of). It lacks the visual and especially aural pizzazz PC gamers take for granted, as the conversion sticks too closely to the source (it doesn't use any more colors than the Genesis version, and the audio is particularly scratchy). The gameplay is still solid, so *Toy Story* is a good, non-violent game for kids and fans of the film.



▲ **Toy Story**

The rest of us are probably moving on to the next-wave of platform games, like Sierra's *Hunter Hunted*. – *Steve Bauman*

Baku-Baku

Sega Entertainment

Windows 95

★★★☆☆

If there is actually a game which has been more over-cloned than *Doom* then it's probably *Tetris*. Countless revamps, rip-offs and just plain awful ideas have been spawned from Russia's prodigal son of the electronic gaming world, and Sega has thrown several into the mix as well, the latest of which, *Baku Baku*, is now available for your PC. *Baku Baku* is *Tetris* with animal food. Basically, the idea is to get strings of touching like-foods (bananas, bamboo, carrots...), then get the proper animal head (monkeys, panda, rabbits...) to touch its respective dietary mainstay, thus allowing it to chow down, making your side of the board thin out and your opponent's thicken up.

Oh yes, *Baku Baku* is very much dependent on head to head action, wherein (like virtually all games of this type) the first side to fill to the top with fruit and animal head blocks loses. In one player mode you play against various goofy characters of different "intelligence" levels, but (and this is the really commendable part) *Baku Baku* also offers two player modem and TCP/IPX network mode, in addition to accommodating two players on the same PC, so that if you find that one other person who bought the game, you can connect to him/her. *Baku Baku* throws in rendered graphics, some interesting 3D effects (like the way the animal heads chomp the fruit when they connect), and plenty of really goofy sound effects. On the downside, there's no straightforward one player, non-competitive mode, and in the one player arcade mode there isn't a continue option to let you try again on the level you lost at. Also, despite what the box (and even the manual) says, there is no Internet multiplay option, which is a disappointing oversight.

So, if you're feeling a little depressed because your life seems devoid of a good *Tetris* clone, then by all means seek this game out (or therapy). – *Jason D'Aprile*

Bug!

Sega Entertainment

Windows 95

★★½☆☆

Hmm. It's hard to sit down to play a video game whose hero probably has cousins encrusted on the radiator of your car… but anyway, another in Sega's marathon of console portovers, *Bug!* is a side scrolling, hop 'n bop platform game with a pseudo 3D aspect to it, but very standard control mechanics. It was one of the first Sega Saturn titles and is actually quite humorous and fairly entertaining in small doses, though decidedly aimed at the youngsters; all of the characters are goofy looking 3D rendered insect-things, the game's main character sounds like a ten year and the gags are just crude enough to keep a ten year old's interest for long enough to get through the game's decently sized, sometimes extremely challenging 18 levels (but not crude enough to warrant concern).

Unfortunately, *Bug!* suffers quite a lot of graphic degradation in low-resolution modes, and the game tends to run rather slow in high resolution modes, though graphics are serviceable regardless. But hey, it runs great in a window. Some of the levels are actually quite entertaining and there are a lot of annoying spaced-out jumps to make, weird laugh-out-loud (well, chuckle anyway) bosses and animations, even some good one-liners (especially the Bug-Juice opera cry). In the end the 16-bit *Sonic the Hedgehog* games were more interesting, creative and on the whole, more fun then the 32-bit *Bug!* when compared on their native console systems, and this is a fact that isn't likely to change on the PC. Still, *Bug!* is a fun platform game with some neat show-off gimmicks that's great for the kiddies. – *Jason D'Aprile*

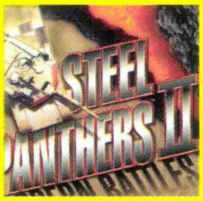
COMPUTER GAMES

CHIPS & BITS INC.
POB 234 DEPT 10839 ROCHESTER, VT 05767
INT'L 802-767-3033 FAX 802-767-3382
Orders/Questions: cbisales@sover.net Customer Service: cbiserv@sover.ne

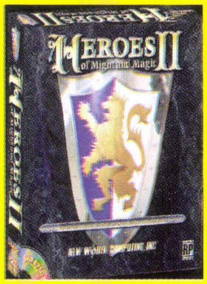
'COMMAND & CONQUER RED ALERT' WWII never happened. Hitler never rose to power. Instead, Joseph Stalin and his Red Army are plunging Europe into a bloodbath of terror. Do you command the Allied Forces? **CD $48**

'STAR GENERAL' Feel the power of an incredibly enhanced Panzer General Game. A 2-level combat system accommodates space and surface combat. Conquer enemy planets with over 90 fully rendered 3D starships and 100's of ground troops and multipul planet types from fertile gems to barren wastelands. **CD$43**

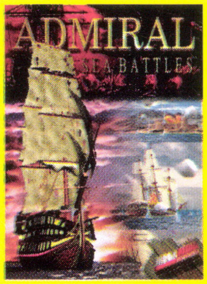
'3D SPEX' From the minute you put these on you're engulfed in 3D game field where wicked realism rules. Bring a whole new level of excitement to PC games, adding to your competitive edge with depth clues unavailable to the naked eye, plus exceptional comfort for hours of gaming enjoyment. **$79**



'STEEL PANTHERS 2' Fight tank vs. tank in this contemporary tactical squad level game. Lead a single platoon or up to an entire battalion while you battle the enemy in various conflicts form the 1950s on, including Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm. You can even experience what World War III would have been like by creating your own "what if" situation. **CD $43**

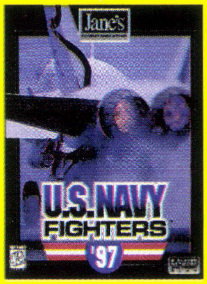


'HEROES OF MIGHT AND MAGIC II' Having crushed his enemies, consolidated his power base and eliminated dissent, Lord Ironfist settled down to rule the land of Enroth. After 25 years the land is again thrust into turmoil. **CD $35**

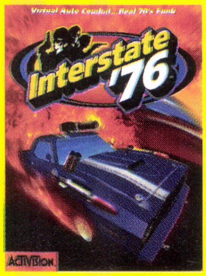


'ADMIRAL-SEA BATTLES' A naval conquest simulation game the combines the best of 18th century naval warfare strategy with challenging board play boasting a full musical score and integrated sound effects. **CD $41**

'PHANTASMAGORIA 2' Craig Curtis is out, trading in his straitjacket and ready to face the world again. The inexplicable starts happening.Talking rats, bleeding photos and a computer with a vicious mind of it's own. **CD $54**



'ACS: U. S. NAVY FIGHTERS 97' Experience some of the toughest air combat in modern history, with all new artwork and terrain, including Vietnam. Make precision strikes and engage in vicious air-to-air combat with the thunder of an F/A 18 on afterburner. **CD $45**



'INTERSTATE '76' Oil is scare and the U. S. economy is crumbling. OPEC is planning to deliver the finishing blow, by destroying the U. S. strategic oil reserve. With a 425 horsepower '72 Picard Piranha and an M60, it's up to you to put a stop to their plans. **CD $48**

'MASTER OF ORION II' Population growth has outgrown planetary resources. Acting as powerful emperors, players start with one colony and control how resources are used. **CD $46**

'MAGIC: THE GATHERING' This top selling trading card game is now; for the first time, an interactive multiplayer online computer game. It's an addictive fantasy game featuring wizards, exploration, adventure and role playing. **CD $46**

'THRUSTMASTER GRAND PRIX 1' Gives you the competitive edge with variable throttle and braking at your fingertips and lightning fast thumb activated shifting. Securely clamps to your desktop. Total steering range is 180 degrees of travel. **$74**

IBM HARDWARE

3D Spex	$79
Altc ACS55 Spker Sys	$159
CH F16 Combtstick	**$58**
CH F16 Fighterstick	**$96**
CH F16 Flightstick	$36
CH Flight Stick	$28
CH Flight Stick Pro	$48
CH Force FX	**$159**
CH Game Card 3 Auto	$25
CH Mach 3 Joystick	$25
CH PC Gamepad	**$18**
CH Pedals	$46
CH Pro Pedals	**$74**
CH Pro Throttle	**$98**
CH Throttle	$62
CH Virtual Pilot Pro	**$69**
Game View	$99
Gravis Blackhawk	$29
Gravis Firebird 2	$65
Gravis GrIP Controllr	$85
Gravis GrIP Pad 2 Pak	$24
Gravis PC Game Pad	$19
Gravs Gamepd Pro	**$27**
Gravis Phoenix Joystk	$83
Gravis Thunderbird	$43
I-O Jaz Drv 1 Gig Ext	$459
I-O Jaz Drv 1 Gig Int	$369
I-O Zp Drv 100M Ext	$199
I-O Zp Drv 100M Int	$199
Joyswitch	**$39**
Labtc LCS 2612 Spkrs	$112
Lgitech WingMn Wrrior	$85
MS Sdwdr Pr W/Hllbdr	$86
Master Pilot	$52
Maxx Control Yoke	$29
M S Sdwdr Pro Pad	**$39**
Sound Blaster 16 Val	$95
Sound Blaster 32 PNP	$152
Sound Gaxy BX2/Spkrs	$29
Sound Glxy NX2/Spkrs	$29

IBM HARDWARE

Space Orb 360	$79
TM Drvng Cntrl T2	**$108**
TM F16 TQS	**$108**
TM F22 Pro	**$124**
TM FLC F16 System	$108
TM Flight Contr Pro	$99
TM Flight Control Sys	$59
TM Game Card	$25
TM Ruddr Cntr Sys	**$98**
TM Weapon Cont Sys	$88
TM Wiz Pinball Cntrl	$32
TM X-Fighter Jystck	$45
TM XL Action Control	$24
TM Phazer Pad	**$47**
TM Driving Cntrl GP1	$74
Thrustmaster Top Gun	$32
USR 28.8 Sportstr Ext	$172
USR 28.8 Sportstr Int	$155
VFX1 Virt Realty HG	$802
Verbal Commander	$119

IBM ACTION

Aeon Flux	$44
Alphastorm	$44
Area 51 W95	$46
Assassin 2015	$38
BladeForce W95	$39
Blood 3D	$48
Colliderz W95	$40
Crusader No Remorse	$26
Crusader:No Regrt	**$34**
CyberMage	$15
Dark Forces	$30
Dark Frces 2 Jedi	**$48**
Dark Vengeance	$45
Die Hard Trilogy	$46
Doom 2 W95	$34
Duke Nukem 3D	$39
Duke Nukem 3D Atomc	$46

IBM ACTION

Duke Nkem 3D Plut Pk	$25
Final Doom	$46
Firefight	$38
Gun Metal	$44
Hard Boiled W95	$40
Heretic Shad Serp Rdr	$37
Hexen Death Kings	$25
Hexen W95	$29
Killing Time W95	$40
League of Pain	$44
MDK	$44
Magic Carpet 2	$29
Marathon 2	$44
Marvel 2099 W95	$34
Master Levels Doom 2	$25
Mayhem	$46
Mortificator W95	$44
Necrodome W95	$39
Perfect Weapon W95	$42
Powerslave W95	$38
Prey	$50
Quake	**$53**
Ruins	$48
Shadow Warrior	$49
Siege	$45
SkyNET	**$43**
Star Trek Genrtns W95	$48
Strife	$39
Subterran W95	$29
Tek War	$18
Terminator Futr Shock	$44
Terra Nova	$20
The Fallen	$44
Time Commando	$40
Ultimate Doom W95	$37
War Gods W95	$45
Witchaven	$25
XS	$46
ZPC W95	$46
Zombieville	$44

IBM ADVENTURE

7th Guest 2 W95	$44
7th Guest	$29
9 W95	$46
Ace Ventura	$41
Aden Quest W95	$43
Advntres on Lego Isle	$35
Albion	**$39**
Alien Trilogy	$42
Aliens	$36
Alone in Dark 3	$33
Anarchy	$41
Ark of Time	$34
Athanor	$40
Azraels Tear	$39
Bad Mojo W95	$39
Bvis Butthd Virt St	**$31**
Bedlam	$46
Beowulf	$45
Bioforge	$15
Black Diamond	$44
Blast Chamber W95	$40
Callahans Crstm Saloon	$42
Chronomaster	$24
Circle of Blood	$43
City of Lost Children	$44
Clandestiny W95	$44
Cold Shadow	$42
Creation	$52
Creatures	$33
Crow:City Angels W95	$42
Curse of Dragor	$41
Curse of Mnky Isle	**$48**
Cyberia 2	$48
Dark Earth W95	**$46**
Dark Rift	$34
DarkSeed 2	$45
Dawn of Darkness	$44
Death Trap Dungeon	$42
Deus W95	$37
Discworld 2	$44

IBM ADVENTURE

Double Trouble	$40
Down in the Dumps	$39
Drowned God	$39
Dune	$29
Echoes	$48
Ecstatica 2	$47
Elk Moon Murder	$26
Entomorph	$35
Fighting Fantasy	$40
Fork in the Tale	$45
Frankenstein	$32
Full Throttle	$28
G-Nome	$43
Gabriel Knight 2	$40
Gadget	$36
HardJack	$48
Harvester	$46
Heart of Darkness	$55
Homicide	$40
Hunter Hunted W95	$45
Incr Shrinking Hero	$43
Indestructibles	$44
Interstate 76 W95	$48
Into the Shadows	**$48**
Iron John Hawk	$45
Island of Dr Moreau	$40
Jumanji	$42
KGB Files	$43
KQ7:Princeless Bride	$19
Knights Chase	$38
Legend of Don Huang	$44
Legend of Kyrandia	$25
Leisure Suit Larry 7	**$48**
Light and Darkness	$44
Lighthouse	$48
Lion	$39
Lost Dynasty	$34
Lost Vikings 2	$42
Lst Fls Shrlk Hlms 2	$42
Magic of Xanth	$42

IBM ADVENTURE

Mission Critical	$39
Mummy Tomb Pharaoh	$42
Myst	$41
Myst 2	$52
Nemesis	$44
Neo-Hunter	$34
Neverhood	$47
Noir	$43
Obsidian W95	$45
Outlaws W95	**$47**
Pandora Directive	$46
Phantasmagoria 2	**$54**
Phantasmagoria	$52
Plague	$44
Planetfall W95	$44
Pod	$42
Police Qust 5 SWAT	$47
Power Dolls	$30
Presto	$45
QAD	$42
Qin Tomb Mid King	$39
Rama	$48
Return to Krondor	**$45**
Reverence	$43
Riana Rouge	$44
Riddle Master Lu	$19
Ripper	$48
Rivers of Dawn	$41
Riverworld	$45
SPQR	$46
SQ6 Spinal Frontier	$25
Sacred Mirror of Kofun	$39
Safecracker	$33
Second World	$45
Secret of the Luxor	$42
Shadoan	$38
Shannara	$42
Simon Sorceror 2	$40
Snow Crash W95	$44
SnowJob W95	$39

IBM ADVENTURE

Solar Crusade	$44
Sonic the Hedgehog	$30
Space Bunnies Mst Die	$45
Spycraft W95	$47
Star Trek Judg Rt Coll	$38
Star Trek Voyager	$48
Star Trk Str Flt Acad	$46
Stars	$42
Surf & Destroy	$46
Surreal W95	$42
Third Millenium W95	$44
TimeLapse Anc Civil	$46
Titanic Jrny Out Time	$44
Tme Wrp Dr Brain W95	$33
Tomb Raider	**$42**
Toonstruck	$48
Torin's Passage	$25
Under Killing Moon	$19
Woodruff & Schnble	$32
Zork:Nemesis	$53

IBM ARCADE

3D Ultr Pbll Crp Nght	$42
Bvs & Btthd Cllg Drks	$19
Bvs & Btthd Wnr Takes	$19
Cyber Gladiators W95	$45
Mnty Pythns Wste Time	$32
Pro Pinball	$37
Road Rash W95	$42
Rocket Jockey	$42
Scorched Planet W95	$34
Tempest 2000	$34
Toh Shin Den	$27
Virtua Fighter W95	$42
Virtua Squad	$42
WWF-In Your House	$40
Worms	$34
Worms Reinforcements	$34
X-Men Chldrn Atom	$42

IBM BUNDLES

20 Wargame Classics	$20
Aces Collection	$25
Air Attack Pak	$30
Archives 2:Star Wars	$48
Atari 2600 AP W95	$25
Attack Stack	$24
Awrd Winning Wrgmes	$22
Complete Grt Nvl Btls	$32
Defntve Wargme Coll 2	$34
Ecstatica Bundle	$19
Eye of Beholder Tril	$25
Fntsy Gnrl Strat Bndl	$34
Heroes M & M Bndl	**$39**
ID Anthology	$99
Intrply All Nghtr 2	$30
Kilrathi Saga	$34
Kings Quest Anthology	$25
Legend Kyrandia Series	$25
Leisure St Larry Anth	$25
Lost Adventures	$29
Megapak 5	**$32**
Might & Magic Trilogy	$19
Pnzr Gen Strt Gd Bndl	$19
Police Quest Antholgy	$25
PowerHits Battltch	$16
Prince Persia Collect	$19
Quest for Glory Anth	$25
Rapid Fire Pak	$29
SU-27 Strat Gde Bndle	$30
Space Quest Anthology	$25
Star Control Collctn	$19
Star Trek Emissary	$33
Str Trek Hollidy Bndl	$29
The Archives 1	$27
Treasures Pack	$15
Trophy Case	$24
Turning Point	$19
Ultimate Gamers Pak	$35
Ultimte Flight Sries	$29
Warcrft Battle Chst	**$55**

Visa, MC and Discover accepted. Checks held 4 weeks. MONEY ORDERS UNDER $200 SAME AS CASH. COD $8. Price, availability, offer subject to change at any time. Hardware orders may require additional shipping and handling charges. Defectives replaced with same product. All sales final. Call for details.

Shipping and handling charges calculated on a per order, per shipment, and per item basis. The "per order" charge is charged once per order placed and the "per item" charge is charged once for each item ordered and the "per shipment" charge is charged once for each shipment we make to you.

	Standard U.S. Mail 7-10 Days	Priority U.S. Mail 2-3 Days	Federal Express 2 Day	Federal Express 1 Day	Mail To Canada 4-7 Days	Mail To The World 7-14 Days
Per Order	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Shipment	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Item	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$6.00

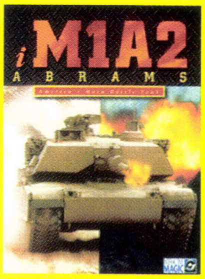
SPLUS297P1

Chips & Bits, Inc. Online at
www.cdmag.com/chips.html

Call NOW to Order! Source 10839

800-699-4263

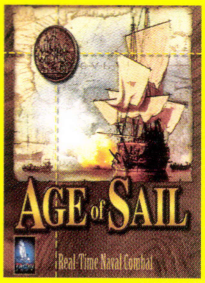
'DESCENT TO UNDERMOUNTAIN' With a visit from a stranger from the future, many characters are now developing in the cracks and under the rocks of ancient caves. Move through an new world of 3D with 360 degree movement. **CD $46**



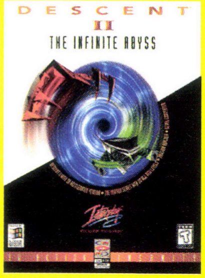
'iM1A2 ABRAMS' The player commands a platoon of four tanks, or an entire company team with other vehicles, artillery, helicopters and artillery attached all from a variety of external views and a multi zoom map view. **CD $45**

'PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING' You decide what challenges each day should include: scouting a dangerous sector, hunting down a wanted criminal, defending an embattled planet, escorting a vulnerable transport, delivering a valuable cargo, flying recon and many, many more to choose from. **CD $49**

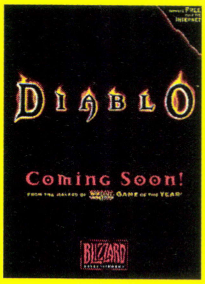
'THRUSTMASTER PHAZER PAD' is the first gamepad of it's kind to offer precise control and maximum performance. Unlike most gamepads, the Phazer Pad is completely user programmable. **$47**



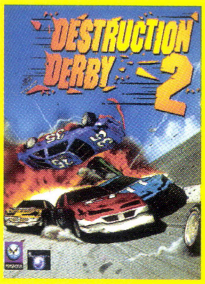
'AGE OF SAIL 1775-1820' Delivers an excellent blend of exciting Real Time 3-D perspective naval combat with all the pageantry and grandeur of beautifully rendered sailing vessels from the Tall Ships era! **CD $42**



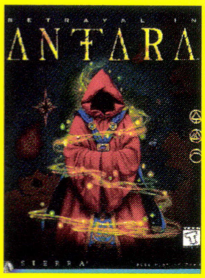
'DESCENT II:THE INFINITE ABYSS' Warped into the furthest edge of the Zeta Aquilae System, you hurtled down to all new alien mines, battling enemy robots for control, fighting to penetrate their base and destroy their stronghold. **CD $48**



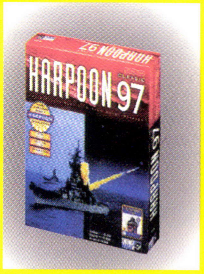
'DIABLO' As a young boy, you return to your village to find it razed and your family dead. Exploration of the countryside reveals that a similar fate has befallen all the neighboring towns, except for one. **CD $46**



'DESTRUCTION DERBY 2' Challenging new tracks that are longer, wider and faster with hills, jumps and high speed banked corners! Get on a collision course with crumple zones and hit and run mayhem! **CD $47**

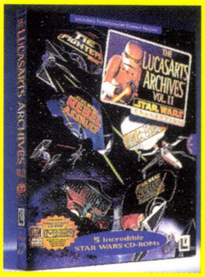


'BETRAYAL IN ANTARA' An empire over time has fallen pry to corruption and decay. Today a well-meaning Emperor faces a crumbling infrastructure where bribery, intrigue, nepotism, deceit and assassination run rampant. **CD $48**



'HARPOON 97' Imagine sitting in the frigid water, strategically guarding the Norwegian coast. You discover a hidden submarine, a fleet of enemy ships heading your way. Your goal is to destroy everything that prevents you from your mission. **CD $44**

'THRUSTMASTER F-22 PRO' With a powder coated metal base, glass filled ABS handle, metal gimbal mechanism, and heavy gauge spring tension, the F-22 PRO gives you the edge you need in advanced tactical warfare. **$124**



'LUCAS ARTS ARCHIVES VOL.II STAR WARS' You don't have to be Yoda to comprehend the wisdom of this deal. 4 classic Star Wars games, plus a look at the theatrical release of the Star Wars Trilogy special edition. **CD $48**

IBM RPG

Anvil of Dawn	$34
Arch Mage W95	$48
Arena Deluxe	$47
Betrayal in Antara	**$48**
Champions of Krynn	$16
Cobra Mission	$29
Curse of Azure Bonds	$16
Dark Sun 2	$19
Dark Sun Online W95	$15
Death Keep W95	$16
Death Knights Krynn	$15
Diablo	**$46**
Die By the Sword	$48
Disciples of Steel	$12
Dungeon Master 2	$25
Elder Scrolls 2	**$56**
Fallout	$48
Forgotten Realms	$46
Halls of the Dead	$38
Iron & Blood	$42
Knights Xent NR18 UG	$5
Knights Xentr PG13	$34
Lands of Lore	$25
Lands of Lore 2	$48
Meridian 59 W95	$34
Of Light & Darkness	$48
Ravenloft Strahd	$25
Ravnlft 2 Stn Prop	$19
Realms of the Haunting	$46
Riftwar Legacy	$23
Rlms Ark Shadow Riva	$45
Sacred Pools	$48
Serpent's Kiss	$43
Skyrealms of Jorune	$33
Star Trail	$29
Star Trek TNG Fnl Unity	$46
Stonekeep	$30
Terracide	$42
Thunderscape	$19
Ultima 7 Series	$15
Ultima 8 Pagan	$15
Ultima 9 Ascension	$52
Ultima Undrwld 1 & 2	$15
Unlimited Adventures	$19
Wizardry Gold W95	$32

IBM SIMULATION

688 Attack Sub 3	$48
A-10 Cuba W95	$40
A.T.F. Gold	$46
A10 Attack	$48
A10 Tank Killr 2 W95	$48
ACS Marine Fighters	$25
ACS Navy Fightrs Gld	$34
AH 64D Longbow	$51
AH64 Flash Pnt Korea	$25
ATF Nato Fighters	$22
Across Desert 1941	$48
Air Cmbt Nvy Ftrs 97	$45
Air Combat Pacifc Gold	$34
Air Warrior 2 W95	$44
Alien Alliance	$48
Apache	$44
Archimedean Dynsty	$41
Armored Fist 2	$49
Army Air Corps 42	$48
Assault Rigs	$19
Battle of the Ironclads	$46
Big Red Racing W95	$29
Black Knight	$46
Burning Road	$44
Comanche 3	**$49**
Command Aces W95	$25
Conquest of the Skies	$48
Darklight	$46
Daytona USA	$42
Dead End	$44
Death Drome W95	$42
Death Race	$34
Descent Bundle	$26
Descnt 2:Infnte Abyss	$48
Destruction Derby	$26
Destrction Derby 2	**$47**
EF 2000 Tactcom	$38
EarthSiege 2 W95	$40
F-22 Lightning 2	$49
F16 Fightng Falcon	$48
FA 18 Hornet 3 W95	$45
Falcon 3 SD1 Fght Tgr	$12
Falcon 3 SD2 Mig 29	$9
Falcon 3.0	$16
Falcon 4.0	$52

IBM SIMULATION

Falcon Gold	$52
Fast Attack	$25
Fighter Duel 2 W95	$39
Fighter Duel Pro	$34
Fighter Duel Pro Net	$38
Flying Corp	$42
Flying Nightmares 2	$42
Formula 1 W95	$48
Formula One	$44
Fury Cubed W95	$39
Great Naval Battles 4	$43
Harrier 2020	$45
Hellbender W95	$38
Hind Helicopter	$44
Indy Car Rcng 2 W95	$48
Indy Car Rcng Comp	$25
Jet Fighter 3	$49
M1A2 Abrams W95	$45
Mech 2 Ad-On W95	$29
MechWarrior 2 W95	$47
Mechwrrior Mercnries	$48
Micro Machines 2	$30
Microsoft FS 6 W95	$53
Mig Alley	$46
Monstr Trck Mdnss W95	$40
Msoft FS 5 Europe 2	$40
Msoft FS5 Flight Shop	$52
Msoft FS5 Grt Airlnrs	$32
Msoft FS5 Objct Dsgnr	$46
Muzzle Velocity	$48
Nascar Racing 2	$48
Nascr Rcng W Trck Pck	$47
Need Speed Gold W95	$45
Need for Speed 2	$49
Rally Championship	$42
Red Baron 2 W95	$48
Rush Hour W95	$44
SabrAce	**$48**
Sail 95	$36
Seal Team	$15
Shattered Steel	$45
Ship of the Line W95	$44
Silent Hunter	$39
Silent Huntr Patrl 1-2ea	$15
SimCopter W95	$40

IBM SIMULATION

Starfighter	$39
Super EF 2000 W95	$46
TFX EF2000	$45
TFX: X-22	$46
Test Drive: Off Road	$42
The Condemned W95	$48
The Darkening	**$49**
Thunder Truck Rally	$47
Tie Fightr Coll	$28
Tom Clancy's SSN	$45
Trophy Bass 2	$48
Viper:Oper Rd Sct W95	$34
Wing Commander 3	$29
Wing Commndr 5 W95	$55
Wing Commndr 4 W95	$42
World Rally Fever	$44
Wrld Circ Gran Prix 2	$44
X-Wing Collector	$24
X-Wng V Tie Fghter	**$54**
iF-22	$44

IBM SPORTS

ABC Monday Night FB	$52
APBA Pro Boxing	$38
British Open Golf	$48
FIFA Soccer 97	$45
Fron Page Ftball 97	**$48**
Front Page Glf W95	**$48**
Front Pg FB Pro 96	$48
Hardball 6	$42
Links LS	$46
Links Pro Courses ea	$19
Links Pro 386	$19
Madden Football 97	**$44**
Mleague Footbll 3 W95	$34
NBA Live 97	$45
NFL QB Club 97	$41
NFL Quarterbk Club 96	$45
NHL Hockey 97	$46
PBA Bowling 2	$35
PGA Tour 96 Crses ea	$19
PGA Tour Golf 96 W95	$37
SimGolf	$40
Triple Play 97	$48

IBM STRATEGY

7th Legion	$48
Aden Magic	$39
Admiral Sea Battles	$41
Advancd Civilization	$39
Age of Empires	$48
Age of Sail	$42
Agents of Justice	$48
Battlecruiser 3000	$30
Birthright W95	$48
Blood & Magic	$46
Caesar 2 W95	$41
Cave Wars	$39
Civilization 2	**$42**
Civilization 2 Scen	$26
Civilization Network	$25
Civilization	$19
C & C Red Alrt	**$48**
Colonization	$25
C & C Covert Ops	$22
Command & Conquer	$47
Command & Conquer 2	$48
C & C W95	**$45**
Conq of New World Dlx	$48
Dark Earth Strtgy W95	$45
Dark Reign Future War	$40
Deadlock	$47
Destiny W95	$45
Dominion	**$44**
Dune 2	$29
Dungeon Keeper	$45
Emperor of Fadng Suns	$44
Empire 2	$24
Empire 2 W95	$24
Empire Dlx Mstr Ed	$19
Enemy Nations W95	$42
Fallen Haven W95	$47
Fragile Alliance	$48
Free Enterprise	$45
Front Lines	$34
Galactic Mirage W95	$41
Grandest Fleet	$19
Heroes M&M W95	$34
Heroes of M & M 2	**$35**
Imperium Galactica	$46
Into the Void	$44

IBM STRATEGY

Jaggd Allnc Ddly Game	$44
Jagged Alliance	$19
Jutland	$19
Lords of the Realm 2	$48
M.A.X.	$48
Magic Gathrng Stratgy	$44
Master of Magic	$29
Master of Orion	$19
Master of Orion 2	**$46**
Mechcommander	$48
Mighty Machines W95	$32
Mission Force	$48
Pax Imperia 2 W95	$48
Pirates Gold	$19
Railroad Tycoon	$24
Reach for Stars 2 W95	$48
Rebellion W95	**$48**
Risk W95	$41
Romance 3 Kingdms 4	$34
Settlers 2	$39
Shadow of the Emperor	$35
Shattered Nations	$46
SimCity 2000 W95 Net	$51
SimPark W95/W3	$34
SimTown	$33
SimTunes	$28
Space Marines	$44
Spaceward Ho! 4 W95	$24
Star Control 3	**$47**
Star General	$43
Star Nations	$46
Starcraft W95	**$46**
Syndicate Wars	$46
Tranpsort Tycoon Dlx	$42
Wages of War W95	$29
Warcraft 2	**$46**
Warcraft 2 Add On	$28
Warcraft 3	$47
Warlords 2 Dlx	$41
Warlords 3	$42
Warwind W95	$43
X-Com Apocalypse	$45
X-Com Terr frm Deep	$41
X-Com UFO Defense	$19
Z	$43

IBM TRADITIONAL

Battleship W95	$41
Chess Wars	$38
Chessmstr 5000 W95	$35
Clue	$40
Game Guru	$24
Game Maker 3.0	$32
Magic Gathering W95	$46
Monopoly	$40
Monty Pythn Holy Grl	$39
Muppet Treasr Island	$37
Othello	$28
Scrabble	$41
Shnghaii Grt Mom W95	$26
Simpsns Vrtl Sprngfld	$42
Ultimate Yahtzee	$28
Virtual Pool W95	$40
You Dnt Knw Jck 2	**$31**
You Dont Know Jack	$31
You Dnt Knw Jck Sport	$31
You Dont Know Jack XL	$42

IBM WARGAMES

Aegis	$19
Afrika Korps	$42
Age of Ironclads	$42
Age of Oars	**$42**
Aide de Camp 2	$43
Allied General	$28
American Civil War	$45
Battle of Bulge	$42
Battlegrnd Gttysbrg	**$32**
Battlegrnd Antietm	**$41**
Battleground Bulge	$28
Battlegrnd Bull Run	**$42**
Battlegrnd Md East	**$42**
Battlegrnd Shiloh	**$39**
Battlegrnd Waterloo	**$42**
Blitzkrieg	$39
CincPac Midway	$19
Close Combat W95	$38
Custers Last Command	$32
D-Day Amer Invades	$39
Defend the Alamo	$19
Definitive Gettysburg	$44

IBM WARGAMES

East Front	$42
Fantasy General	$35
Fifth Flt Scen Mod 1	$19
Fleet Med	$19
Flight Cmmd 2 MB	$19
Gene Wars	$34
Great Battles Alexndr	$44
Harpoon 2 Deluxe	$25
Harpoon 97 W95	$44
Harpoon Classic	$19
Iron Cross	$28
Last Blitzkrieg	$41
Nam	**$42**
Operation Crusader	$39
Over the Reich	$39
PTO 2	$34
Pacific General W95	$45
Pacific Storm Midway	$29
Pacific Storm Solomon	$19
Panthrs Shdws Cmp1-8	$15
Panthers in Shadows	$42
Panzer General	$19
Panzer General 2	$42
Panzerblitz	$42
Perfect Gen 2 w/Scen	$30
Point of Attack	$24
R E Lee CW Gen W95	$48
Rebel Chrg Chicamagua	$15
Road to Moscow	**$43**
Rommel at El Alamein	$19
Sid Meir Civil War	$58
Stalingrad	$39
Steel Panthers	$37
Steel Panthers Cmpgn	$15
Steel Pnthrs 2	**$43**
TACOPS	$44
Tank Resistance 2024	$39
Third Reich	$39
Tigrs Prowl Cmp 1-3 ea	$15
Tigers on Prowl Map	$15
Tigers on the Prowl	$29
Tigers on the Prowl 2	$42
V Victory Bundle	$28
Wargame CS3 Rifles	$43
Zukov's Campgns	**$37**

SPLUS9297P2

by Cindy Yans

Road to Nowhere

How cheap is talk?

One reason for the popularity of the "virtually creatureless world" style of adventure (think *Myst*) is that we are so often frustrated by the conversation systems encountered in more highly populated environments. So many ways to handle the integration of creature interaction are possible, both in the design and in the programming, that it must be difficult to come to a decision about which one will best serve the material.

One of the most difficult tasks a game scriptwriter must face is how to juggle a grapefruit, a bowling ball and a pistachio nut, all the while turning handsprings and whistling, *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*. You have to: a) tell the story; b) develop characters; and c) maintain mood and pacing, all in a medium which is often questionably suitable for passive participation.

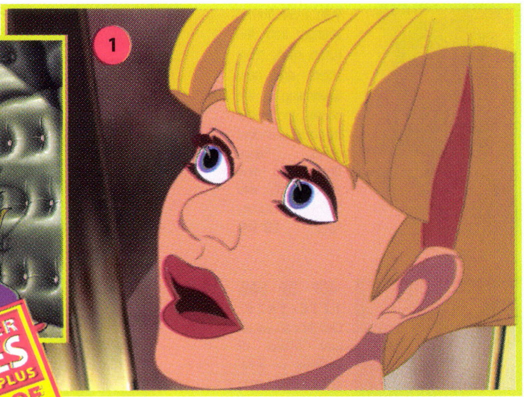
Adventure gaming demands interactivity. How many times have you wanted to tell the on-screen character to, "Shut up and let me *play*!" Certainly we know we have to get plot exposition *somehow*. Intelligent gaming sometimes also requires us to climb inside a character's psyche in order to plan our strategy or make cogent choices. But when we sit there at 3:00 a.m. (and you *know* you do, so don't deny it), bleary eyed and somewhat spaced, it becomes even more important to be able to play actively, not listen.

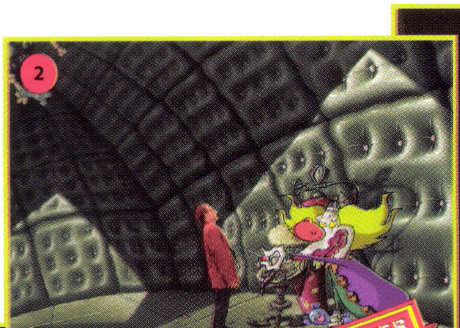
So what works well? Interactive dialogue trees with reasonably short snippets can sometimes be effective. In the olden days, Lucasarts' *The Secret of Monkey Island* did an extraordinary job with dialogue trees; short, to the point, humorous, and the player's choices were often meaningful to gameplay. Some of the more recent models have mixed results. It should be unnecessary to click through every piece of available dialogue each time you encounter a character. Repetition is very annoying. Cyberflix solves this with "smart" conversation, during which the AI recalls previous interactions (in *Dust* and *Titanic*, for example). Broderbund's *In the First Degree* is a game which is *entirely* conversational, and its pull-no-punches interface works perfectly for this type of experience.

Third-person games provide even more of a challenge to writers, since the player him/herself is not offering the dialogue. Instead, we are watching scene after scene of OPC (Other People's Conversations), and it takes a good deal of skill to remove the boredom from *this* activity. Virgin's gorgeous-to-look-at *Toonstruck* suffers from what seems to be *interminable* dialogue in many spots, turning what could have been a fast-paced romp of a game into a trial of the player's patience.

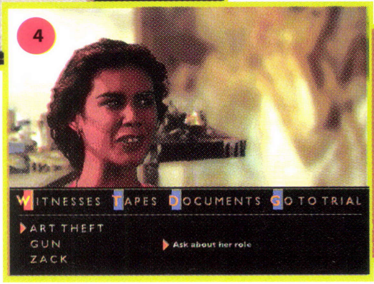
Circle of Blood, on the other hand, overcomes the use of a technique which I normally find uncomfortably repetitive, involving the usual pattern of "talk to person A about X then talk to person B about X then talk to person C...," but somehow the writers have managed to keep each interaction fresh enough that it works anyway… not an achievement taken lightly. And in Take 2's *Ripper*, as painful as it is to watch the acting, the video sequences are relatively short, to the point and generally informative.

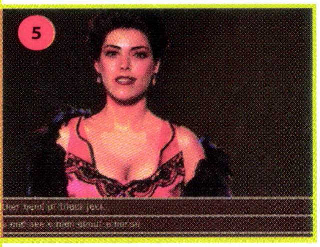
Finally, anyone who does not provide interruptable dialogue at this stage in the development of multimedia gaming creates automatic potential for consumer burnout and product dissatisfaction. The third time through is *no longer amusing*. Once a gamer becomes "seasoned" (and there are a growing number of us), it's not as easy to keep him/her entertained at the small screen. We do appreciate the sticky position of product developers who are pushing technology to the limit each day in order to bring us more realistic experiences, but hope they will keep in mind that those who are expecting consistent interactivity may have the attention span and patience of two-year-olds. We simply can't help it.





COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL





[1] Savvy writing saves Circle of Blood from coagulating

[2] Even Christopher Lloyd couldn't pick up the pace for Toonstruck

[3] Amber: Journeys Beyond - belated kudos

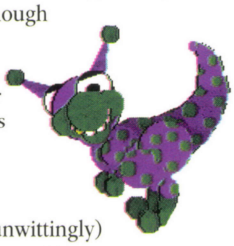
[4] In the First Degree — dialogue says it all

[5] Cyberflix's Dust enjoys a conversation system that's just a bit slicker

Squeezing the last drop of blood out of the engine

PF Magic's latest mutation of its *Petz* engine brings us *Oddballz*, another interactive computer toy giving humans and creatures more opportunities to make the most of that coffee break.

It features about seven eggs, which hatch into peculiar creatures looking and acting suspiciously like the *Catz* and *Dogz* of days gone by. But there is enough new here to make the product yet another charming must-have for those of us who love this sort of thing.

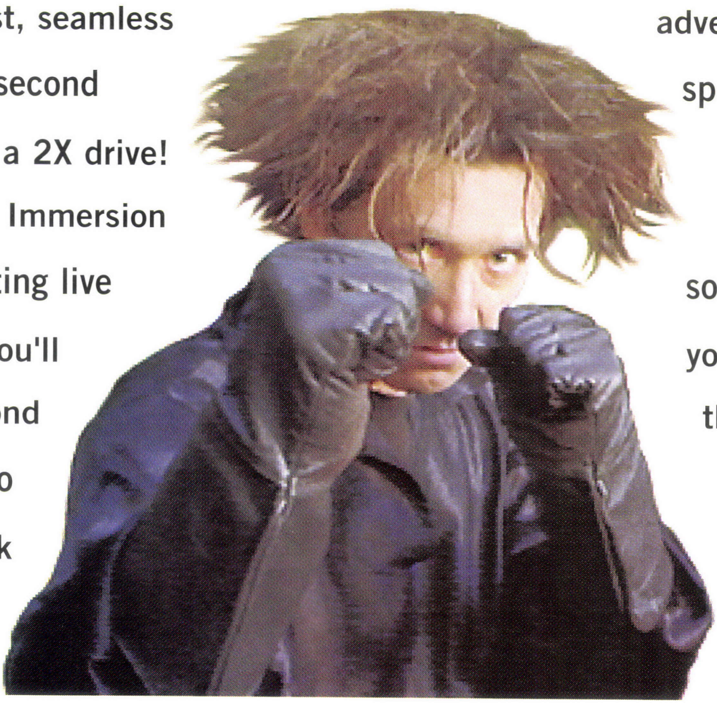


Erratum

We (nonchalantly but unwittingly) omitted a Stamp of Approval from our Issue 72 review of *Amber: Journeys Beyond*, a haunting and compelling pilgrimage outside the reality of our drab, wretched lives to explore supernatural realms of wonder and suspense.

Apologies to its creators, folks who truly felt the impact of the cast and crew of *The Love Boat*. *Amber* is now available for Windows 95. ■

THINK FMV SUCKS? THINK AGAIN.



Think about fast, seamless 15 frames per second video – even on a 2X drive! Think about an Immersion Engine™ projecting live action so fast you'll make split second decisions just to stay alive. Think about 5 CD's packed with adventure, puzzles and special effects! It's all in A Fork In The Tale™ – the new game that's so fast, so interactive you're killed 6 times in the first 10 minutes. If this game doesn't change the way you think about FMV* nothing will!

* Full Motion Video

NOT CONVINCED? GET THE FREE DEMO.

YOU'LL MEET THIS GUY. HE'D LOVE TO REARRANGE YOUR JAW WHILE SETTING YOU STRAIGHT. CALL 1-888-GET-DEMO WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!

Yeah, they're beautiful babes in fur bikinis. (Unfortunately, they want to kill you!)

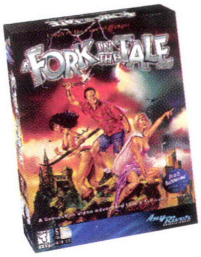
These marauding kingsmen need a hand. (Your hand! And then they'll kill you.)

Up for a little face stomping? (Before Geebo – yeah you guessed it – kills you.)

"Thanks to me and half a dozen other outrageous stand-up comedians, there are so many laughs in A Fork In The Tale that FMV now stands for Funny with My Voice!"

Starring funnyman Rob Schneider as the voice of the hero.

A FORK IN THE TALE.
A HILARIOUS LIVE ACTION ADVENTURE.



AnyRiver ENTERTAINMENT

www.anyriver.com

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Call 1-800-771-3772
for Game Rating Information.

AnyRiver Entertainment™ and A Fork In The Tale™ are trademarks of AnyRiver Entertainment, Inc. Immersion Engine™ is a trademark of Advance Reality interactive.

by Andy Backer

Boots of Re

Unca undertakes more royal quests and saves Exile

Dragon Largo (another tale about the dragon who thought he was Bogart)

I once took Beata to Dragon Largo, a vacation hideaway in the Florida Keys not too far from Margaritaville. She had taken to calling me Rick, by then. I still called her Slim, but we became better known by other names because of the hurricane. The tourists saw me scrambling to find a safe place to hide during the storm while Beata just slept through it. Now we're known as Boogie and Banal.

Hot & Not

Daggerfall, rightfully, was overwhelmingly the most popular role-playing adventure during October/November. *Albion* was in second place while *Nemesis*, sporting superior SVGA graphics, came in third.

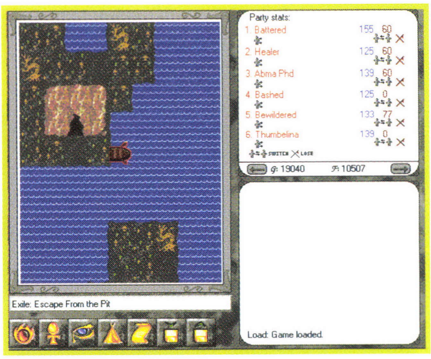
Lighthouse was the most popular puzzle-adventure, although *TimeLapse* was a close second.

Exile: Escape from the Pit (part two)

Exile is a shareware role-playing game, similar graphically to the early Ultimas (which may be a turn off for some). Contact **www.outreach.com/fantasoft**.

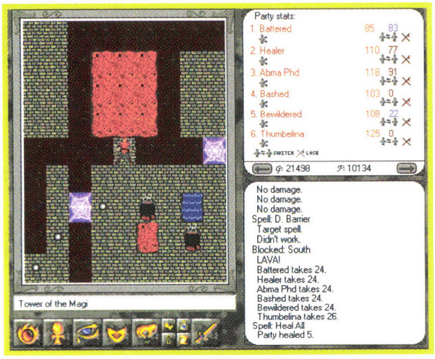
Major Spells: Slow Group is in Formello; Heal All, Major Heal, Destone, Major Haste and Group Fear are in the Tower of Magi (ask X about "Boutell" and talk to Throndell); Major Blessing is on the top floor of the Nephilim fort; Dispel Barrier is in Fort Dranlon (Mirewen wants the slith tome from the slith town in the swamp on the other side of the river in exchange); Protection is in the ogre mage's bedroom in the Ogre Cave (near the Tower of Magi). The Tower of Magi (south from Silvar and then east) has the Blessed Athame (hidden behind a secret door in the east wall of the lava room). Make sure you buy and equip the rings and cloaks for sale here.

The tip of the Demonblade is hidden in the Crypt of Drath (not Death) in the Waterfall Maze south of Stagnant Caverns. On the second floor, push two buttons (hidden northwest and southwest) to reveal stairs to the third floor. Go through the east teleporter three times and search the east wall for secret doors. Kill the undead and go south to find the teleporter to the stairs up.



```
Party stats:
1. Battered      155  60
2. Healer        125  60
3. Abma Phd      139  60
4. Bashed        125  0
5. Bewildered    133  77
6. Thumbelina    139  0
SWITCH  LOSE
G: 19040    F: 10507

Load: Game loaded.
```

An Onyx key is in the Slith Fort (enter the cave)



```
Party stats:
1. Battered      85   83
2. Healer        110  77
3. Abma Phd      118  91
4. Bashed        103  0
5. Bewildered    108  22
6. Thumbelina    125  0
SWITCH  LOSE
G: 21498    F: 10134

  No damage.
  No damage.
  No damage.
Spell: D. Barrier
  Target spell.
  Didn't work.
Blocked: South
  LAVA!
  Battered takes 24.
  Healer takes 24.
  Abma Phd takes 24.
  Bashed takes 24.
  Bewildered takes 24.
  Thumbelina takes 26.
Spell: Heal All
  Party healed 5.
```

The Blessed Athame is hidden behind a secret door in the east wall of the lava room

An Onyx key is in the Slith Fort north of Slith Castle island. Take Sss-Thss's head to Micah and ask about "mission" to be rewarded. Leave the room, come back and type "mission" to get Micah's next quest. Micah sends you to Fort Remote where you battle demons. Return to Micah to get your last mission.

To release Grah-Hoth go to Skaragoth with the Blessed Athame (take a boat to Spire and walk southwest). Enter the fort and trigger the two buttons behind secret doors in the north and south to open the gate to the east. Enter the outer prison of Grah-Hoth. A secret wall in the southwest leads to a button that turns off the first of two teleporters in the northeast wall of the inner prison. There you'll find a secret door to Grah-Hoth's flask.

Row to the square south of the sign "The Waterfall Warren" at the beginning of the waterfall maze. Go five west. two south, three east, three south, three east, three south, five west, one south and continue south over two waterfalls. Stagnant Caverns is to the east. One of the bodies inside (north) has Thraini's Orb (get it identified).

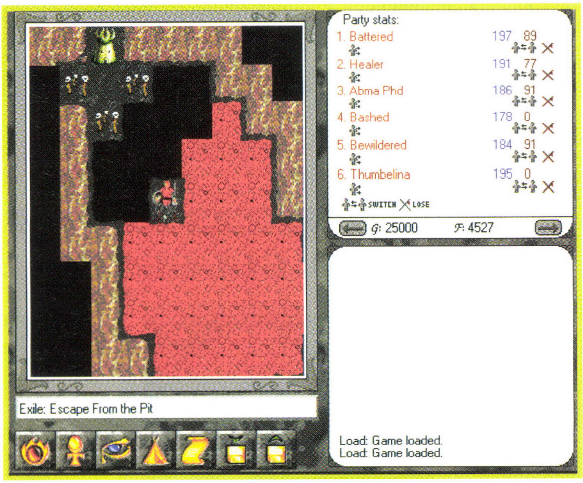
Get the Giant Key from Giant Fort (row up river north of Slith Castle as far as you can, then walk west) to open nearby Giant Gate and go north. Row a boat west far as possible, then walk to the Tower of Grah-Hoth in the northwest. Use Thraini's Orb to fly over the large lava pools and the open chasm. Inside the tower northwest of the lava pool there's a boat you can use to row to the doors.

Drink the water (in the east and west rooms) to lower the magic barriers in the north behind which Grah-Hoth and his horde of demons await. Concentrate only on killing Grah-Hoth, use plenty of Protection, Bless and Haste spells. When he's dead, return to Micah and claim your reward.

Congratulations, you've now saved Exile.

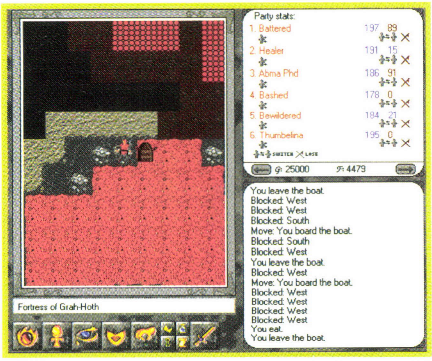
Sbohem (Czech for goodbye)

Next time, we'll escape from Exile's underworld. ■



```
Party stats:
1. Battered      197  89
2. Healer        191  77
3. Abma Phd      186  91
4. Bashed        178  0
5. Bewildered    184  91
6. Thumbelina    195  0
SWITCH  LOSE
G: 25000    F: 4527

Load: Game loaded.
Load: Game loaded.
```

You can fly over the chasm to reach the Tower of Grah-Hoth



```
Party stats:
1. Battered      197  89
2. Healer        191  15
3. Abma Phd      186  91
4. Bashed        178  0
5. Bewildered    184  21
6. Thumbelina    195  0
SWITCH  LOSE
G: 25000    F: 4479

You leave the boat.
Blocked: West
Blocked: West
Blocked: South
Move: You board the boat.
Blocked: South
Blocked: West
You leave the boat.
Blocked: West
Move: You board the boat.
Blocked: West
Blocked: West
Blocked: West
Blocked: West
You eat.
You leave the boat.
```

Use the boat in the pool of lava to reach the door to the inner chambers of the Tower of Grah-Hoth

Trust

A secret shared.
A promise kept.
A heart opened.

Trust is the shiny jewel glistening brightly in the rock of friendship. Then, like any rock, it can be a powerful tool.

A blunt object that can be hammered against your allies' unsuspecting, trusting skulls, against a monolithic church and warring noble houses, against all that stands between you and ultimate power as leader of the universe. Trust is indeed a shiny jewel.

EMPEROR of the FADING SUNS

A military strategy game in space.

SEGASOFT
www.segasoft.com

For a free Windows '95 demo or to order Emperor direct, call 1.888.SegaSoft

Emperor of the Fading Suns, Fading Suns, and the Fading Suns universe and its distinct characters, logos and marks are copyright Holistic Designs, Inc., 1997. SegaSoft and the SegaSoft logo are trademarks of SegaSoft Inc. ©1997 All rights reserved.

Designed for Microsoft Windows 95

TEEN T AGES 13+ CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

A classic novel brought to life

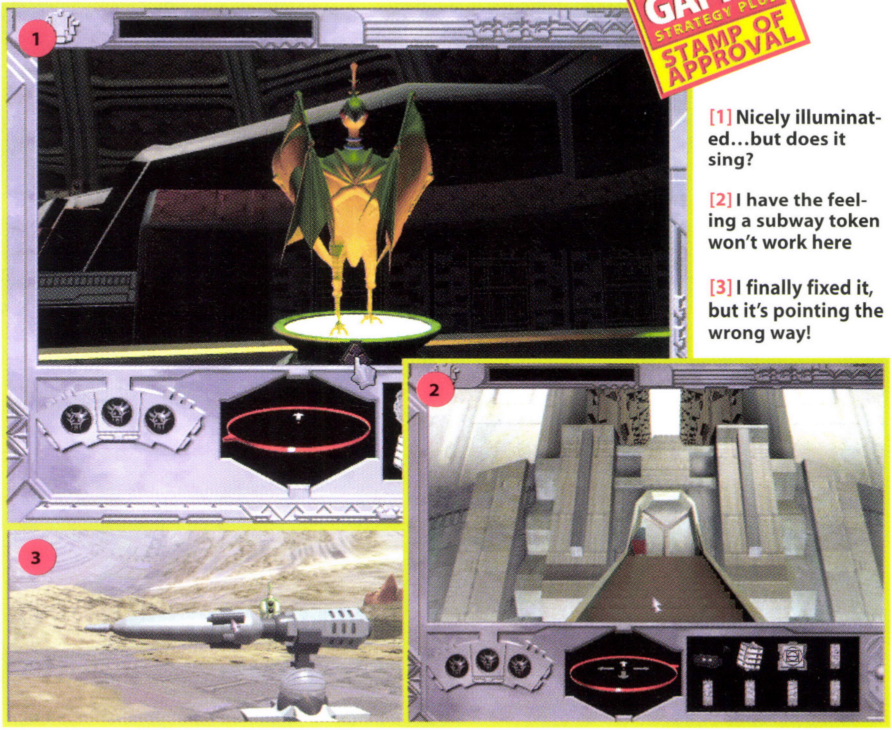
COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL

RAMA

Sierra

DOS, Windows95

★★★★☆



[1] Nicely illuminated...but does it sing?

[2] I have the feeling a subway token won't work here

[3] I finally fixed it, but it's pointing the wrong way!

The two things which should be most important in adventure games are story (first), and puzzle design (second). The technology, the interface, the means of conveying these two elements should all take a back seat in the gamer's experience, ideally becoming intuitive enough to prove irrelevant to the gaming process. At least that's one opinion.

Sierra's new sci-fi adventure, RAMA, based on the novel *RAMA II*, by Arthur C. Clarke and Gentry Lee, is clean enough in overall design to make the game eminently playable at this fundamental level. It also succeeds best mainly with the second most important thing. The series of challenging-yet-logical puzzles scattered throughout the large game world prove varied enough to sustain interest all the way to the end of the game, even though the story element is pushed into the background more than you'd think it would be in a game based carefully upon an extremely popular, well-conceived and well written, er, story.

This is the biggest surprise for anyone coming to the game anticipating a narrative extension of *RAMA II*, the novel; despite some enticing and encouraging early video, effectively integrated into the game and plausibly scripted and acted, the presence of others – human *or* alien – is sorely missed during most of the game. While the fiction of *RAMA II* does, after all, involve a sustained hunt for artifacts and information to unlock the mysteries of the sudden appearance of a massive alien spacecraft/world heading towards Earth, the best part of the novel involves all sorts of human interaction around issues of teamwork, xenophobia, struggles for power and love and attention, the effects of large-scale social ideas and issues upon the most intimate human relationships, and more. Tidbits of that part of the *RAMA* story surface here and there, but for the most part, they've been excised from the core of the game.

Is this an implicit commentary on the difference between a novel and a computer game, an admission of the severe limitations of this latter medium when it comes to representing human interaction, or simply a marketing decision to fall into line behind the massive success of *Myst*-style, object-oriented "adventure" game designs? Certainly no translation of written fiction into another format can ever hope to capture the entirety or the richness of the written experience; in movies based on fiction, at least, the effort (when the best translations are made) is put instead into focus upon the flavor of the world of the novel being translated. Some aspect of the novelistic experience is capture precisely and evocatively, and works well at the level it aims for.

In this computer game, if the equivalent approach to translation is driving the decisions which have been made for the design, the suggestion then is that a computer game translation of fiction means pushing the human/social elements to the periphery, and making the machinery, the objects, the interaction with inanimate things, the main focus of the experience.

Again, at this level *RAMA* the game works quite well. If you're patient enough to work your way carefully, methodically, and thoughtfully through each of the kinds of puzzle and object-oriented challenges you're presented, you'll find little if nothing here to frustrate you. Upon solution of most puzzles, you'll come away feeling satisfied you've had your intelligence (or at least cleverness) challenged, instead of your blunt willingness to overcome some arbitrary block of your progress, just to get to the next section. The only glitch at this design level is a time-based puzzle presented towards the end of the game (why designers feel the need to throw such into adventures continues to perplex). For some, this one may prove a show-stopper; be forewarned. The door puzzles, though, based on pattern-matching of certain of the many tiles you find scattered around the gameworld; the arithmetic puzzles, requiring your translation of simple counting, addition and subtraction problems into hexadecimal and octal-based numbers systems (and also into avian and octospider alien alpha-numerics); the object-combination puzzles, requiring use of various tools and elements to make tools to solve certain problems, some of which the game offers hints for in the course of play, all combine consistently around the fiction of working your way through a series of "tests" set up for all species aboard RAMA the spaceship, tests which are a prelude to encounters with the other species and an understanding of the meaning and purpose of RAMA. The logic of puzzle-solving as prelude to contact and social interaction is thus consistent at this level with the conception of *RAMA II* the novel.

All of the above is not to suggest that there's *no* interaction or story; on the contrary, from the very beginning you're introduced into a mystery, compounded by various secret messages passed you by the crew members of the human RAMA expedition. At one level the mystery is all-too-obvious: part of the crew simply wants to blow up RAMA and sabotage/halt the scientific expedition as soon as possible, and it's your job to uncover the plot and stop this from happening. At another level, the mystery of who the inhabitants of RAMA – in this game, the avians and the octospiders – are involves discovery of the means of communicating with other species, through languages of musical sound in the former case and colored lights in the latter. This is the most fascinating and motivating part of the story presented. As long as you sustain the fiction that you're trying to learn how to communicate in alien languages with alien species, the problems to be solved along the way maintain their importance and interest. Lose interest in accomplishing this task, however, and many of the puzzles and problems will lose their value for play, and their connectedness with the primary task at hand.

Finally, there's the mystery of RAMA itself. A legion of "biots," huge, insect-like machines with rudimentary intelligence, functioning primarily as the janitors and self-maintenance aspects of the RAMA spaceship/world, have to be comprehended, accommodated, avoided and made use of to get to the last parts of the game. As part of the scientific crew, your discovery and understanding of the purpose of RAMA derives in some part from your unveiling the purpose of the machinery which makes RAMA go; your success in completing the game is ultimately based on this process as well.

RAMA is certainly a complex, appropriately challenging but not impossibly difficult, consistently conceived and executed game world to work your way through, and will provide many hours of satisfaction if you stick with it. Late at night, though, you may find the whole thing a pretty alienating experience (pun intended), as there's little in the way of community or passionate personal interest to hook into as you play. And then there's Puck: one of the wittiest, most ingenious elements of the novel's construction, translated here into your help/hint device, with all the intelligence of a drowned rat. "That monitor seems to be turned off." "That machine is completely incomprehensible to me." Uh… thanks, Puck; can I blow you up now? Skip Puck; look for love interest elsewhere; and enjoy *RAMA* as a high-quality puzzle adventure, which does a good job of capturing the flavor of the mechanics of the RAMA world of Clarke's/Lee's novels. *–Steve Wartofsky*

Phantasmagoria: A Puzzle of Flesh

Sierra On-line

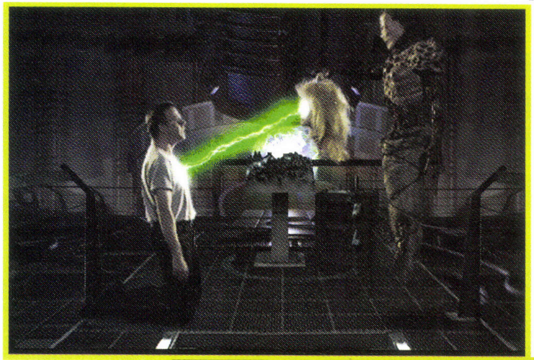
Windows 95

★★⯪☆☆

When the lights are out, and the fear pulses through our veins and we become cold, nauseous, faint and suffer heart palpitations – well, what could be better than that? Those of us who are entertained by horror, truly entertained, are a diverse bunch. Dissimilarities abound, but the one thing which holds us together is the delicious tingling we get from the tremendous power of fear. Why this is true and what triggers our fears might best be discussed in Stephen King's *Danse Macabre*. But it remains that writers and directors in the horror genre always strive to find our threshold of fear and push us one or more steps beyond.

Phantasmagoria, Sierra's previous attempt to stick us to the ceiling, had a pale and meager story, weak puzzles, mostly laughable special effects and some pretty bad acting. *Phantasmagoria: A Puzzle of Flesh*, the latest attempt, has as *its* greatest asset writer Lorelei Shannon. She has woven a very suspenseful horror mystery with a plot which unfolds gradually, and which keeps the reader, uh, player guessing until the very end about what, exactly, is going on. If you know before Disc 4 (of 5) has ended what the climax will be, then you're truly psychic – or psychotic – or both.

You control Curtis Craig, a technical writer for Wyn Tech Pharmaceuticals (actually, who or what *really* controls him is at the center of the plot). A quiet, young professional who has been out of the mental hospital for just about one year, Curtis has a good job, a steady girlfriend who loves him and a devoted best friend. Before you know him very long, however, things start to fall apart for Curtis. Strange, inexplicable things begin to happen, dragging him further and further away from his newly-acquired sanity. The Hetacomb, a deformed inhuman entity, pursues Curtis relentlessly, dredging up abominations from his past and leading him to believe he is responsible for the recent proliferation of murders in the workplace. Curtis is now unsure whether or not he has committed these murders; and so are we. The game's focus is to learn about the history and future plans of Wyn Tech, to explore Curtis' psyche, and to find an explanation for the disquieting events condemning him to a blinding hell on earth. To further expose the plot at this time would be a disservice to Ms. Shannon and to you, so let's proceed with a discussion about *A Puzzle of Flesh*'s contribution to multimedia gaming.



Phantasmagoria: A Puzzle of Flesh

Since it's almost entirely composed of FMV (which even in high-res mode looks as though we're viewing it through dishwater), it is difficult to know whether to evaluate this product as a game or as cinema. It tries to be both, and unfortunately, in both cases falls short. The video sequences have many problems with continuity. Classic continuity issues exist, such as now-you-see-them-now-they're-gone props; but more annoying is that in order to enhance interactivity, the designers have chosen to break up single units of interaction into smaller video units. Clicking three or four times in succession on a character to get *one* conversation, or seeing Curtis enter the same space three or four times in a row to show *one* person three or four items is unnecessarily cumbersome. Inorganically "artistic" use of camera angles doesn't work well, nor do the first-to-third-person-and-back transitions. Special effects in most cases are grade-B-flick-esque. The acting is respectable here with few exceptions, especially the performance of Paul Morgan Stetler as Curtis, who had every opportunity to overdo and didn't. Bravo.

Again we're faced with the usual problem of incorporating puzzle design into an interactive movie. Puzzles are either extremely easy and boring (use the screwdriver to open the desk), moderately un-intuitive (an early decryption puzzle requiring that you be focused on a very tiny snippet of conversation) or completely "out there" (an endgame circuit puzzle comes from waaaaaay out in left field).

It's possible to finish the game in less than ten hours, which some would say is hardly worth the price of the ticket. But let's look at the original premise...the crew behind this endeavor wants to scare you. They don't *want* you to plow through the thing in record time. They want to offer an immersive, interactive experience which tells a gripping and disturbing story. And in these objectives, they achieve a modicum of success. When I sit back *without* my eye-of-the-critic in place, I *am* affected by the material. I *am* disturbed by the violence, insanity and child-torturing. Some of the visuals really *do* hit hard… and the music? Chilling. At times, I was scared – really scared... So, is it excellent cinema? No. Is it riveting gameplay? Definitely no. But is it worth the trip? We'll definitely see a love/hate relationship here. Hard core puzzlers steer clear...unless you want just a tiny illicit affair – with the dark. *–Cindy Yans*

Titanic

GTE Interactive

Windows 95

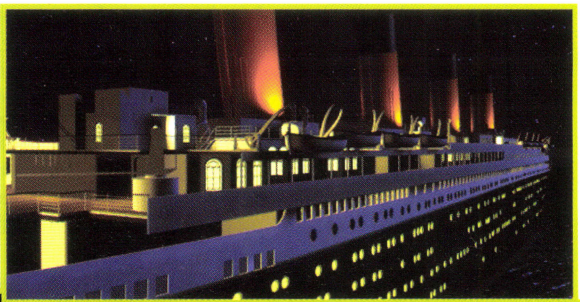
★★⯪☆☆

How frustrating! Here's what could have been a little gem of a game: European aristocracy, out on its metaphorical last sea-cruise before WWI, aboard the fated Titanic; a riveting story of international espionage and spy intrigue, with you as the person to unravel it all; a beautifully, painstakingly wrought recreation of the environs of the Titanic, down to the last bed-stand and stairwell; an obviously well-researched understanding of the mood, style, accoutrements and attitudes of the historical period during which the game takes place; and characters in love, characters in distress, characters with various metaphysical and financial and personal agendas, even complex psychological profiles, all wonderfully acted and completely believable. Sounds like a recipe for a stunning adventure game, fulfilling all the weakening hopes of even the most faithful adventure gamers for true, narratively intelligent and sophisticated *adventure*, no?

Well, no. You see, here's a case where the technology's so much in the way it puts paid to any hope of fun with all of the above. The wonderful acting – handled admirably in the voice sampling for the game – is destroyed by a weird, almost Cubist/collage cookie-cutter approach to animating the digital imagery of the actors' performances. Various bitmaps of different parts of each character's face moving are cycled through, to convey variations in expression, mouth moving while talking, etc. The effect is sufficiently informative to let you know that most of the actors did a good job of acting physically as well as vocally, but disintegrates the mood and any involvement the player might have at that moment with the game and character. Characters you could almost be in love with instead leave almost nightmarish impressions behind, just because their bitmaps have all been cut up and shuffled. There *has* to be a solution somewhere between this and MPEG-1-quality crummy FMV video. Agh! Number One.

Agh! Number Two is a little less unique to this adventure game; while we're fortunately pretty much freed from the almost schizophrenic/catatonic quality of the *Myst*-style gameworld (you know, where it's you as the only real consciousness and the rest is inanimate, mysterious machinery?), the movement through the Titanic is still very *Myst*-like – or, more precisely, *11th Hour*-like – which means you'll be angling constantly across open spaces in ways you'd never do in real life to accomplish simple tasks. Rather than slip between that chair and the table to get next to the character you'd like to discuss the metaphysical nature of a diamond necklace with (he's only two feet away, mind you), you'll have to first turn left, walk past the steamer trunk, face the faucet, turn left again, head for the door, then turn around... by which point you've perhaps forgotten why you wanted to talk with the character in the first place. Sigh.

Past these two profoundly off-putting technological gaffes, however, lies an interesting, gripping story, and a game world that's a real pleasure to participate in. You've suddenly been thrown back into the past thirty years, as a result of the impact of a bomb in London during WWII, and you hope you'll be able to re-live the past and, this time, make the contact you needed to make back then as part of Her Majesty's Secret Service, to possibly thwart the chain of events which led to the sinking of the Titanic. As the game's story evolves, you find yourself caught up in the lives, intriguing and conflict of the other people you meet on-board, and have to resist being side-tracked from your professional pursuits as a Secret Agent.



Titanic

There's just enough inventory to prove reasonable for the situation you're in at any moment (no endless stacking of objects arbitrarily in abstract spaces; you carry a briefcase, and what fits reasonably in that briefcase can be put in there). Your butler aboard the Titanic – Mr. Smethells – serves as a guide and assistant, and functions as an unobtrusive help/hint system, through conversation with him. The conversation system, by the way, is much like that in *The Pandora Directive*, simple and to the point. A map Smethells gives you at the beginning makes moving around the ship simple, so there's little aimless wandering to do.

So what's wrong with this picture? The software design. Ain't it a shame: they finally got the adventure right. They finally got the story going. They crapped out with the technology. Ah, well; some day we'll have both. May the people who wrote and acted and illustrated the backgrounds for this thing be the first to get there. *–Steve Wartofsky*

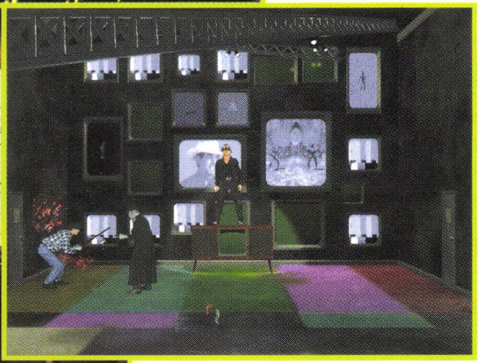
Harvester

Merit

DOS

★⯪☆☆☆

Taking place in a subpar Lynchian (as in David) setting (think *Blue Velvet* minus the pretentiousness), *Harvester* puts you in the shoes of a young lad who's lost his memory and thinks the key to finding it may lie in joining the lodge dominating the time-warped town of Harvest. As you attempt to pass the initiation rites, you run across a series of odd characters, mostly ripped off from every Lynch film extant (there's a midget, though he doesn't talk backward and dance in slo-mo). Upon joining, you'll discover the horrible secret of Harvest, and experience a *dénouement* which proves effectively disturbing.

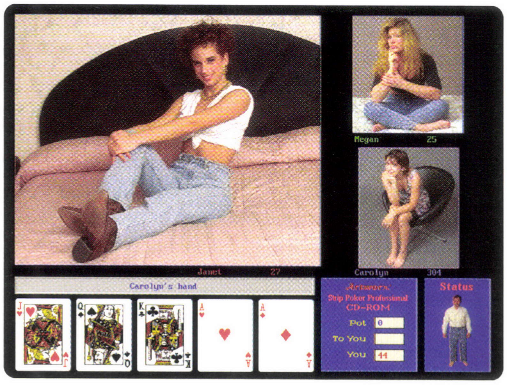


Harvester

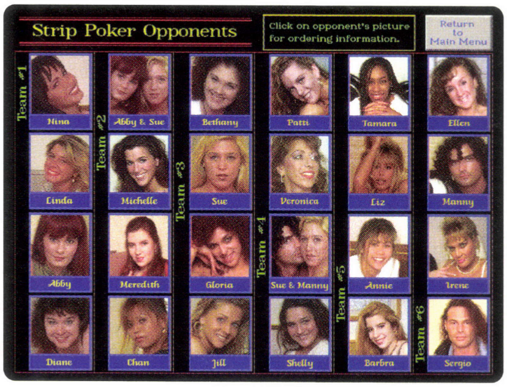
As you play this most typical point and click adventure, it's soon clear the developers set out to create the Grand Guignol of gaming; it's all severed heads and disembowelments. On that level the game is a success, but somewhere along the way they felt guilty and decided to add a point. As a morality tale about the origin of violence and serial killers, *Harvester* packs less subtlety than a thousand Oliver Stone films. *Natural Born Killers* is a sophisticated treatise on the nature of evil compared to this thing (as opposed to being a movie which gets the audience off on the director getting off on violence).

Artworx
CD-ROM
IBM Compatible
CRYSTAL CLEAR GRAPHICS
with
CCG
SUPER VGA GRAPHICS
PROFESSIONAL
RANDOM PLAY
Strip
Poker
VOLUME II

NOBODY PLAYS JUST ONE GAME OF STRIP POKER PROFESSIONAL...


Megan 25
Janet 27
Carolyn 304
Carolyn's hand
Artworx
Strip Poker Professional
CD-ROM
Pot 0
To You
You 44
Status

CD-ROM version features hi-res Super VGA graphics using our Crystal Clear Graphics! Random Play provides different outfits and poses every time you play! (Volume II)


Strip Poker Opponents
Click on opponent's picture for ordering information.
Return to Main Menu
Team #1
Nina
Linda
Abby
Diane
Team #2
Abby & Sue
Michelle
Meredith
Chan
Team #3
Bethany
Sue
Gloria
Jill
Team #4
Patti
Veronica
Sue & Manny
Shelly
Team #5
Tamara
Liz
Annie
Barbra
Team #6
Ellen
Manny
Irene
Sergio

Each CD-ROM contains 24 additional opponents who can be purchased over the phone by calling a toll-free number.

Settle in for a sizzling evening of STRIP POKER as this unique program pits your poker skills against Erika, Lana, Sherry and Claire. The more chips you win, the more they take off! Our latest enhancements found in Volume II of this computer classic include all new opponents and our unique Random Play feature— your opponents have up to three different outfits and there are many different poses at every level of play. The computer selects outfits and poses at random. Every time you play the game, you get a different sequence of images. With an average of over 60 poses per opponent, you will never lose interest even when playing the same opponents over and over again. And, of course, the graphics are our state of the art CCG 800x600 Super VGA Graphics. And, using the latest in CD-ROM technology, we are able to include an additional 24 opponents on this CD-ROM! They are available in groups of four and can be economically and conveniently ordered and immediately unlocked by placing a toll-free phone call!

Requires IBM compatible computer, CD-ROM drive, 4 Meg RAM, Super VGA Graphics Card and monitor.

SP Pro CD-ROM Volume II: $54.95
SP Pro CD-ROM Volume I: $49.95
SP Pro Disk Version: $29.95
DATA DISKs for Disk Version (16 available): $14.95 @

CRYSTAL CLEAR GRAPHICS with CCG

WINDOWS Macintosh CD ROM
COMING SOON!

Artworx®
1844 Penfield Rd Penfield, NY 14526
(800) 828-6573 · (716) 385-6120
info@artworx.com (email)
http://www.artworx.com (website)

Available at discount from:
CHIPS & BITS INC.
PO Box 234 • Rochester, VT 05767
(800) 699-4263 • (802) 767-3033

Source: 10784

In a twisted way, you have to admire the people who put this together, because they did risk the scorn of the industry. This is exactly the sort of game to get Congressmen all hot and bothered, something an emerging industry making an attempt at self-regulation does not need. In the end, though, the greatest condemnation of the game is not that it's violent or sickening. Like *Night Trap*, it's a bad game because… it's a bad game. The puzzles are mediocre, the animation crude and the arcade fighting segments a terrible idea (they dominate the last third of the game). The designers may have thought they were making some sort of social statement, but the intended point is lost in all the sound and fury of oozing eyeballs and babies being hacked apart. It'll play well with the teens, because they'll think it's edgy and funny (missing the parody and irony, assuming they're actually there), but adults will no doubt find it stupid. – *Steve Bauman*

Harvester

Star Trek Borg

Simon & Schuster Interactive

DOS, Windows 95, Macintosh

★⯪☆☆☆

The next in the series of *Star Trek* offerings from Simon & Schuster, *Star Trek Borg* is the first one that tries to be primarily a game; while there is something of a multimedia reference (called "The Picard Papers"), it is really just a sub-set of the *Omnipedia* that deals with the Borg. With that in mind, one would hope that there would be a pretty hefty game in the box, but unfortunately, we get another full-motion video (FMV) "adventure" in the style first seen with *Star Trek Klingon*; to twist the words of the Borg, gameplay is futile.

You take on the role of a Star Fleet cadet, whose father was killed by the Borg at the famous battle of Wolf 359; the infamous "Q" (played with his usual flair by John de Lancie) offers to take you back in time to try to save your father. Gameplay consists of watching an FMV sequence, followed by making a decision at a decision point. If you die, you go back to a previous decision point and watch through the video again; no skipping a video sequence unless you know the secret code. While irritating in the extreme, it wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for the fact that the game's interface can really break down at a decision point; often the correct answer is obvious, but just *how* to implement it isn't (or, even worse, you don't have time to implement). This means you often fail repeatedly, meaning you're forced to watch the video over and over. The saved game feature doesn't really help, as the only time you can restore a saved game is when you first boot *Borg* up (although sometimes it's faster to exit the program and reload a saved game than it is to watch through the video).

Of course, without the tricky interface the game would go by much too quickly; most gamers could plow through in just a couple of hours. Trekers will appreciate the capability to watch the FMV sequences straight through (up to a saved game position of your choosing); it'll give the collectors a 90 Trek show that's about the same quality of the TV shows. Any other gamer, though, will probably want to pass. – *Scott Udell*

ADJUSTING SHIELD FREQU UNK
Star Trek Borg

Leisure Suit Larry 7: Love for Sail

Sierra On-Line

DOS, Windows

★★★★☆

You probably expect a *Leisure Suit Larry* adventure to be about a seventies polyester-clad schnook who seeks sexual encounters and finds a thousand and one different ways to fail.

This game is different. Larry is still clad in polyester but it's the nineties, has a bald spot and is clever enough to trick most women into bed. He's older and wiser. Well, not really wiser; he's still a schnook, but a clever schnook.

The game takes us on a sea cruise where there are more than enough beautiful women for Larry (and the gamer) to encounter, but his primary objective (and the plot) is to bed the most beautiful trophy on the ship: Captain Thygh. All he has to do to win her favors is to score high in the shipboard contests of bowling, cooking, horseshoes, fashion, craps and sexual prowess. If the gamer is also clever, Larry can find ways to cheat his way to the top of these events (and have fun doing so).

Although the game is filled with blatant innuendo and puns (including such names as Dewmi Moor, Jamie Lee Coitus, Drew Baringmore, Nailmi and Wydoncha Jugg) there is no full frontal nudity (at least close-up) and the sexual encounters are inoffensive. This is a game with more tease than sleaze, as has always been the case with the *Larry* series.

Everything about the production end of the game is magnificent. Backgrounds, animations, and sound have all been upgraded. The interface has been upgraded, too, from icons to pop-up windows. For the old timers there is even a place to type in some commands.

Some may not enjoy a politically incorrect game with a hero who is shallow and sexually obsessed, but for those who do, *Love for Sail* is a must buy; the best *Leisure Suit Larry* ever. –*Andy Backer*

Leisure Suit Larry 7: Love for Sail

The Music in Me

ReadySoft

Windows

★★★☆☆

Octave Fingertips is no more. The world-famous household word, Julia, is so shaken by the loss of her musical director that she cracks up and goes Disney — that is, she preserves herself cryogenically until as talented a director as Fingertips reveals him/herself. This godsend could be you.

The main quest, de-popsicle-izing Julia, begins with her father Land O'ner, who starts you on a musical journey though her past. Travel through time to discover the great moments of Julia's life from birth to ice cube,

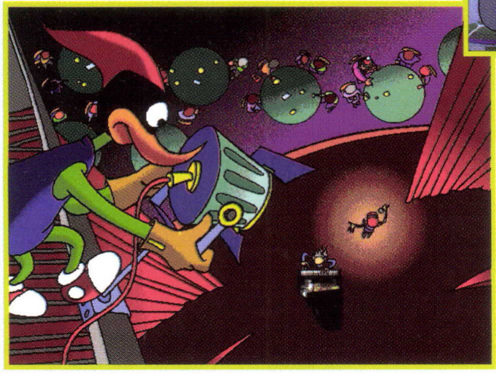
CALLAHAN'S
CROSSTIME SALOON
"the right place in any time."
an adventure straight-up, with a twist of comedy.
LEGEND ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY
www.legendent.com

Mosey on down to Callahan's for a nice, cool, euphoric buzz. Throw back a shot of comedy, chase it with a dash of time travel, and mix in 10 or 20 of your favorite aliens...now, you're ready to party. It's good old-fashioned fun without the hangover.

as you solve puzzles which will reveal 41 musical instruments. Find all of them and you will have proved that music flows through your veins and, of course, Julia will melt and the world will regain its beloved pop star.

The Music in Me is the cornerstone of a *Music Chase* series, which may or may not materialize based on the success of this debut. There is no mass appeal here. We have a totally niche product, which players will either love or hate. The former is true for me, but there's no denying that although this title's strengths outweigh its weaknesses, you should be prepared for what's in store before taking the symphonic plunge.

The Music in Me



There are two equally important facets to the game, and neither one stands alone as a reason to buy it. The first is a traditional adventure game, where using objects correctly will reveal the 41 instruments and complete your quest. The second is an almost action-arcade game in which you must "play" these instruments at five difficulty levels each, using the keyboard as your instrument. The latter activity is *hard*, folks (and not necessary to complete in order to win). Your rhythm and execution must be absolutely perfect, or you will not complete the level; the higher levels are particularly complicated. Even piano and keyboard players may be challenged in some cases.

The music is jazzy and the cartoon graphics are excellent; so if you like light jazz and *both* aspects of the game sound appealing to you, then grab it. You're the target audience. Otherwise, pass — because you'll probably want to strangle Julia before too long. *–Cindy Yans*

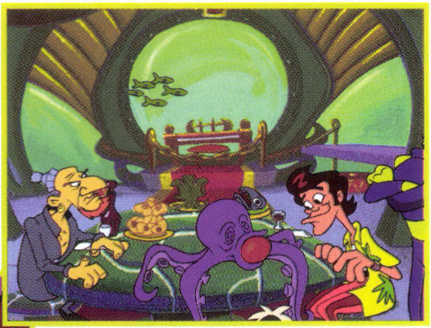
Ace Ventura

7th Level

Windows

★★⯪☆☆

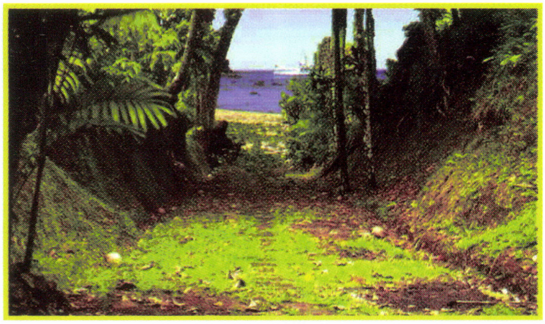
He just about *bursts* through your screen with a rollicking, "Alllllll*righty* then," and proceeds to leer, mug, wisecrack and otherwise attempt to ensconce himself in your affection. The pompadour is thirty-five feet high, and his eyebrows leap from the bridge of his nose to the base of his do, arching craftily in all-knowing manifestations. His Hawaiian shirt is more blinding than Elizabeth Taylor's jewelry collection. He's impossible to ignore. He's Ace Ventura, in *Ace Ventura.*



Ace Ventura

Gameplay begins in Ace's apartment, a menagerie with very unlikely combinations of creatures stashed in every corner. The player controls Ace in a series of three modem-assigned mega-cases. From a pirate-infested submarine to the Bavarian Castle of Fatteus Lardus, Ace will solve crimes relating to unspeakable acts performed upon his feathered, furry, scaly and slimy friends; and once his college roommates are safe from harm, Ace will defend the rest of the animal kingdom.

The plots here are oversimplified and lack subtlety (actually, every blasted *thing* lacks subtlety which is not necessarily a bad thing — subtlety is certainly *not* our hero's forte). The cartoon locations are wonderful and the animations work extremely well. What *doesn't* work well are the puzzle elements and the method of handling unsuccessful attempts to interact with objects.



The Sacred Mirror of Kofun

The puzzles are sparse and simple with few exceptions, and will probably leave no one feeling particularly clever. Amidst the puzzles are several misbegotten, poorly-conceived arcade sequences. And particularly annoying, Ace often repeats one of the same four or five "you can't do that here"- style phrases over and over, whether or not it makes any sense to do so. For instance, if you try to repeat a previously successful action, you will often be insulted by Ace as if the action had never worked in the first place. It becomes maddening.

If you can stomach a never-ending Jim Carrey imitation, have a high tolerance for cutesy, fluffy, kittily-puppily pranks and are not bothered by arcade sequences in your adventure fare, then *Ace Ventura* might be up your alley. If not, then send him up someone else's dark alley — preferably some porterhouse-breathing, knife wielding carnivore in a fur coat. That'll loin him. *- Cindy Yans*

The Sacred Mirror of Kofun

Enteractive, Inc.

Windows, Macintosh

★⯪☆☆☆

The Sacred Mirror of Kofun...Nofun. Not quite a rhyming couplet but a couple nonetheless. Superb graphics, especially in 16-bit color, and underwater diving sequences filmed by Jean-Michel Cousteau Productions are the highlights of this multimedia title that touches upon the ecosystem of the Pacific coral reefs and attempts to immerse you in a mystery surrounding a legendary artifact.

Your mission is to find a site amidst the reefs to launch the Poseidon Research Lab, an observation and analysis station from which scientists can study the impact of global environmental trends on coral reefs. Complications arise when John Braddy, oceanographer and archaeologist, is kidnapped while following the trail of an ancient, sacred mirror. In command of the futuristic ship Antares, you search out clues to Braddy's disappearance, both on South Sea islands and in underwater World War II wrecks.

The shipboard and diving interfaces are well designed but land exploration, particularly the first island, is a case of hunt the arrow. Here an arrow, there an arrow, rarely-in-the-same-place-twice an arrow, so begins the struggle to solve the mystery of the mirror. The story, already weak, is not enhanced by tedious searches through the game's computer for clues, and puzzles (note plural here) that degenerate into trial and error searches for the one correct solution out of myriad possibilities.

The manual is not just so much extraneous matter that was included in the package. It is a must read and failure to do so will increase the already high frustration factor several hundred fold. Reading, research and analysis are the cornerstones of *Kofun* and the less-detail oriented person will indeed have Nofun.

For this game, you really have to ask yourself if you feel lucky. If you do, run out and buy a lottery ticket and leave this one on the store shelf. *–Janet Blackburn*

ADULTS ONLY

ORDER NOW! 800-273-7910

***Check out our HOT online catalog!* www.cdmag.com/adultsonly.html**

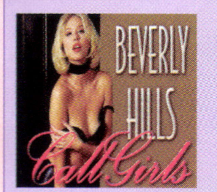
PO BOX 14 DEPT 10840 HANCOCK, VT 05748 INT'L 802-767-3033 FAX 802-767-3382 SOURCE 10840

Strip Poker
VOLUME II

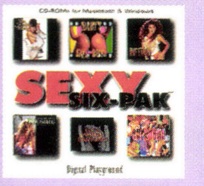
'STRIP POKER PROFESSIONAL VOL. 2' combines the action of 5 Card Draw with some very different table stakes, 4 gorgeous opponents who are willing & able to bet it all for the chance to beat the pants off you! **CD $29**

Jade Palace

'JADE PALACE' Save our beautiful damsel-in-distress by finding the missing jade s and defeating the evil wizard. Enjoy heart-stopping rewards along the way. Animated with mind-boggling 3-D environments and hour long professional hardcore video specifically filmed, this game will blow you away. **CD $19**



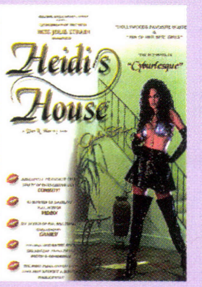
'BEVERLY HILLS CALL GIRLS' Pay a grand and be a man! Meet the Beverly Hill Call Girls you could never afford. This super-hybrid disc will blow your mind. You caught glimpses of them in the press, now reach for your mouse and make them come alive. **CD $15**



'SEXY SIX-PAK' Lose yourself in hours of erotica with interactive digital video. This incredible money saver (a $150 value) delivers to you six of the hottest adult CD-ROM titles released by Digital Playground: The Barlow Affairs, Baby's Got Butt, Inferno, Dripping with Desire, Erotic Virtual Sampler and Elite European Models. **CD $35**

CRYSTAL FANTASY

'CRYSTAL FANTASY' Venture through the cave of lust and find the secret crystal.Interact with the sexiest young jewels of the MacDaddy harem. Take snapshots of the girls and play with them in your own private portfolio. Six highly interactive, three dimensional gorgeous babes! **CD $25**



'HEIDI'S HOUSE' is the most stimulating CD game ever played and is automatically designed to change each time you play it, offering dozens of combinations for hours of fun. **CD $36**

INTERACTIVE

2069 Oriental Sex Odys	$66
Anal Rom 2	$42
Asians in Wonderland	$46
AssTroids	$40
Buster Cherry	$45
Casting Couch	$39
Circus	$29
Crystal Fantasy	**$25**
Cyber Photographer	$29
CyberStrip Black Jack	$36
CyberStrip Poker	$36
CyberXperience	$49
Cyberpeep 2 Nurse	$20
Cyberpeep Cheerldr	$20
Designer Bodies	$29
Diva X Rebecca	**$38**
Doll House	$39
Dream Machine 2	$49
Dream Machine	$36
Duke Screw'em	**$45**
Eros 3	$24
Fantascenes Anal	$46
Girlfriend Donna	$49
Heidi's House	$36
Hot Slots	$37
Interact Seymore Bt 2	$49
Interactive Sex Thrpy	$46
Intimate Journey	$24
Japan Interactive	$44
Latex	**$44**
Lust Connection	$39
Mind Teazzer 2	$32
Mystik Mistress	$36
Net Erotique	$22
Nightwatch Int 3	$46
Oriental Ecst Exposed	$39
Outpost 69	$40
Pandora's Poker Palace	$35
Passion Poker	$29
Penetration	$19
Penthouse IA 6	$52
Porn Mania	$29
Porno Poker	$32
Porntris	$24
Private Investigator	$49
Private Plsr Park	$26
Private Plsr Park 2	$49
Private Prison	$44
Rodney Rubber Show	**$39**
Samurai Pervert 2	$64
Scissors N' Stones	$19
Sex TV 2	$25
Sex:The Game	$49
Shock:The Game	$49
Sorority Sex Kittn	$29
Space Sirens	$29
Space Sirens 2	$29
Spy Club	$25
Strip Fighter	$40
Strip Poker Pro	**$24**
Strip Poker Pro 2	$29
Strip Tease	$24
Texas Table Dance	$24
Time Warp	$45
Titus Strip Poker	$48
Ultra Slots	$28
Ultra Vixen	**$49**
VCA 6-Pack	$29
VCA's Sex	$22
Vampire's Kiss	$36
Venus Playhouse	$35
Virtl Las Vegas Nite 2	$25
Virtual Director	$39
Virtual Golden Eye	$44
Virtual Sex 2	$39
Virtual Sex Shoot	$44
Virtual Valerie 2	$36
Virtual Victor	**$42**
Virtual Vixens	$19
Virtually Yours 2	$39
Wheel of Fantasy	$19

MOTION

101 Orient Delts 2	$19
Adult Superstars	$26
Adventure Kid	$22
Amateur Models 4	$28
American Blond	$24
American Sweethrts	$25
Amorous Asia Girl2	$15
Anal Asian 2	$25
Anal Misconduct	$15
Anthony's Desire	$19
Asia X	**$27**
Asian Heat	$24
Asian Paradise	$39
Asian Silk	$16
Babes Illustratd 2	$25
Baby's Got Butt	$24
Bacchus Six Pack	$45
Back Door Mistress	$19
Bad Girls 2	$12
Bangkok Nights	$24
Bedlam	$16
Best of Vivid	$24
Betrayal	$27
Beyond Explicit	$28
Big Boob Babes	$12
Big Bust Babes	$28
Billionairs Blonds	$28
Black Book	$34
Black Nurses	$15
Blond Justice 3	**$16**
Boby Language	$16
Bone Alone	$25
Bonnie and Clyde	$16
Borderline	$19
Bra Busting Babes	$25
Buttmns Bub Butt Bbes	$45
Casting Call 2	$36
Cat House	$19
Chasey Saves World	$29
Cheeks	$18
Christy In the Wild	$14
Cinesex	$24
College Girls 2	$24
Day Dreams	$25
Deception	$24
Deep Thrt Grls 4Pk	**$52**
Deep Tush 2	$22
Demon School Concl	$20
Desert Passion	$25
Dirty Debutnt 6 Pk	**$44**
Dirty Litl Adlt Car 2	$24
Dirty Western 2	$25
Divorce Law	$19
Doors of Passion 2	$26
Dripping With Desire	$17
Electrosex	$19
Endless Passion	$19
Eruption	$5
Fantasy Lifestyle 2	$19
Fatal Temptation	$19
Femme Fatale	$23
Flesh for Fantasy	$24
Friction	$16
From Asia With Love	$15
Geisha's Secrets	$16
Ghostly Desires	$39
Girls Doin' Girls 2	$26
Girls on Girls	$22
Glamor Girls 3	$16
Hard Core	$24
Hawaii	**$16**
Heidi's Girls Exposed	$15
Hidden Agenda	$26
Hist Of Blue Movie	$15
Hollywood Babylon	$19
Hollywood Scandal	$19
Home Front	$30
Hot Dog Girls Florida	$14
Hot Talk	$16
House Sleep Beauties	$12
In Defense of Savanah	$16

MOTION

Jade Palace	$19
La Blue Girl 4	**$22**
Legends of Porn 2	$19
Lethal Passions	$26
Made In Japan	$16
Main Street USA	$19
Menage A Trois	$26
Mind Shadows	$19
Model Wife	$24
Murphy's Brown	$24
Mystique Orient 2	$24
Nasty Neighbor Girls	$19
Natural Instinct	$18
Net Games	$16
New Machine 6 Pk 2	**$44**
New Machine 6 Pk	$42
New Wave Hookers 2	$24
Nice But Naughty	$16
Night Nurses	$16
Nova Collection 5	$19
Oriental Action	$15
Oriental Diaries	$17
Oriental Syndrome	$22
Oriental X-Press	$22
Pandor...AAAH's	$19
Parlor Games	$25
Peep Show 2	$32
Pheonix	**$16**
Pink Lady Detective	$24
Platinum Six Pack	$42
Play Mistrss fr Me	$24
Pleasure Dome	$28
Pleasure in Paradise	$25
Private Collctn 2	$22
Private Collection	$48
Private Moments	$19
Putting All Bhnd 2	$24
Racquel Released	$12
Racquelle in Wild	$24
Romsoft Six Pack	**$32**
Romsoft Six Pk 2	$32
Romsoft Three Pack	$18
Samurai Pervert	$49
Savannah Superstar	$24
Secret Garden 2	$19
Select a Pet 2	$29
Sex 2	$24
Sex Games	$24
Sexual Healing	$16
Sexy Nurses 2	$25
Sexy Six Pack	$35
Seymore Butts Swings	$18
Seymore Six Pack	$39
Seymr Bts Bustin Out	$18
Seymr Bts Rides Again	$18
Southern Beauties 2	$32
Southern Belle	$36
Superstr Japan Porn 2	$39
Sushi Bar Girls	$29
Swedish Erotica	$15
Swingers Worldwide	$9
Temptation	$19
The Vision	$22
Things Change	$25
Tokyo Nightlife	**$48**
Totallly Raw Amateur	$20
Toys Not Boys	$29
Tracy I Love You	$24
Ultimate Teasers	$20
Ultimate Tokyo	$29
Up & Down Love	$34
Vagablonde	$24
Vice	$24
Virgins Vol 2	$29
Virgins Vol 3	**$39**
Voices in My Bed	$19
Wager of Love	$25
White Wedding	$16
Wicked Whispers	$19
Women Beverly Hills	$24
XXX-Treme 2	$19

STILLS

Adult Image Library	**$19**
Adult Palate 2	$22
Adult Pict Libr 4	$19
All Night Long	$12
Amateur Photo Gallery	$6
Asian Pearls 3	**$25**
Bankok Beauties	$19
Beautiful Nudes	$19
Busty Babes 4	$39
Celebrity Nudes	$25
Domin-A-Trix 2	$24
Elite Centerfold Mod 2	$24
Elite College Girls 1	$24
Elite European Model 1	$19
Erotic Playground	**$16**
Japanese Pearls	$28
Latin Lust	$29
Legs Lace & Lingerie	$24
Ropes & Chains	$19
Secret Treas Japan	$17
Tabloid Beauties	$19
Thai Bondage	**$26**
Thrills	$9
Tokyo Glamour Girls	$29
Village Collection	$29

GAY

Bacchus Six Pack (Gay)	$45
Bike Bang	$20
Boyfriends	$20
Boys of Paris	$17
Cruising Ground	$20
David	$20
Home Boys 2	$24
Man's Touch	$32
Manhunt	$18
Men In Motion	**$32**
Men In Uniform	$36

VHS ANIME

Adventure Kid	$24
Angel of Darkness	$24
Countdown	$24
Demon Beast Invasion	$24
Dragon Knight	$28
Dragon Pink	$24
Elven Bride	$24
F3	**$24**
Guy: Awakning Devil	$24
Kekko Kamen	$25
La Blue Girl	$24
La Blue Girl Gift Box	**$98**
Magical Twilight	$24
Miyuki-Chan in Wndrlnd	$25
New Angel	$24
Rei Rei	$29
Twin Dolls	$27
Urotsukidoji 3: Bundle	$85

VHS MOTION

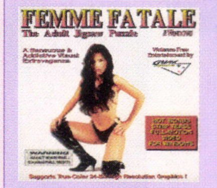
Aladdin X	$26
Alice in Pornoland	$26
Blonde Next Door	$15
Casual Sex	$15
Cousin Betty	$12
F...and Lots of It	$15
Hamlet	**$29**
Hanky Panky	$15
Innocence Lost	$15
Lesbian Nymphos	$15
Marquis De Sade	$26
Max the Naughty Dog	**$22**
My First Time	$15
New Babysitter	$15
Passion	$26
Sex Symbol	$15
Young Lust	$15

FREE DISK

Buy 2 Adult Titles From the List Below and get the One of Equal or Lesser Value FREE!

Amateur Photo Gallery, Crystal Fantasies, Tabloid Beauties, Phone Sex, Net Erotique, Swingers Worldwide, Taste of Erotica Sampler, Glamor Girls & Eruption.

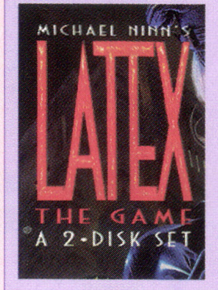
Request must be made at time of purchase. Quantities limited. Offer subject to change or cancellation at any time. Effective Jan 15 - Feb 30 1997.



'FEMME FATALE FOR WINDOWS' Build your dream girl with Femme Fatale! A hot adult jigsaw! Features include, a long, tantalizing ALL NUDE full motion strip-tease video. Also 250 hot 24 bit images of 62 girls used with included puzzle. Load/save game, BMP, PCX, GIF, TIF, DIB, TGA, WAV audio and more. **CD $23**

cyber simulator
DIVA X
rebecca

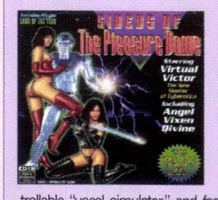
'DIVA X:REBECCA' After dropping off your friend at the airport, you chance upon a lost beauty who queries for your assistance. "Do you know how to get to the Avalon Agency?", She asks in a sexy French accent. Being the gentleman you are, you kindly offer her a ride to her destination. Her eyes engage in silent conversation with yours. From there - the adventure begins! **CD $38**



'LATEX THE GAME' Find yourself in a sprawling retro-future city of Alphaville-with no way out. Your goal: Explore every nook and cranny of the desolate town for clues that will eventually lead you to the climax of the game. **$44**

GET FULLY INTERACTIVE!
SUPER HOT ADULT 6 PAK!

'ROMSOFT 6 PACK' Double Down, Doors of Passion 2, Sensuous Girls in 3D, Massive Melons, Touch Me, Feel Me and Private Screenings are what you'll get in this sexy 6 pack! **6 CD'S $32**



'Virtual Victor' the new master of cyberotica, starring in Sirens of the Pleasure Dome. Features include a stunning navigable user friendly 3D world, user controllable "vocal simulator," and fast erotic arcade-style action with multiple positions that change on command. You are in full control of Victor's movement, speech and positions. **CD $42**

DREAM MACHINE 2

'DREAM MACHINE 2' As a lone hacker, mankind is counting on you to destroy the government deployed NetVirus which has taken over the dream machine, where people fulfill their sexual desires. Your reward - the hottest sex man can experience. **CD $49**

Visa, MC and Discover accepted. Checks held 4 weeks. MONEY ORDERS UNDER $200 SAME AS CASH. COD $8. Price, availability, offer subject to change at any time. Hardware orders may require additional shipping and handling charges. Defectives replaced with same product. All sales final. Call for details.

Shipping and handling charges calculated on a per order, per shipment, and per item basis. The "per order" charge is charged once per order placed and the "per item" charge is charged once for each item ordered and the "per shipment" charge is charged once for each shipment we make to you.

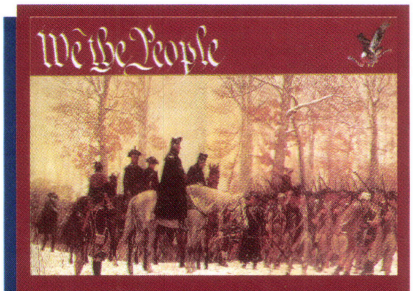
	Standard U.S. Mail 7-10 Days	Priority U.S. Mail 2-3 Days	Federal Express 2 Day	Federal Express 1 Day	Mail To Canada 4-7 Days	Mail To The World 7-14 Days
Per Order	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Shipment	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Item	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$6.00

© 1997 CHIPS & BITS, INC.

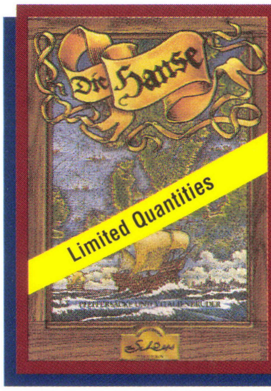
BOARDGAMES AND RPG'S

Call NOW to Order! Source 10842

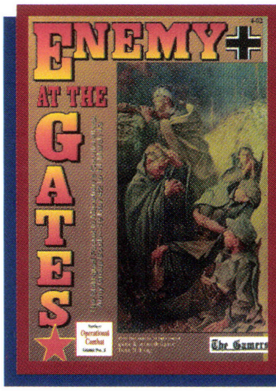
800-699-4263



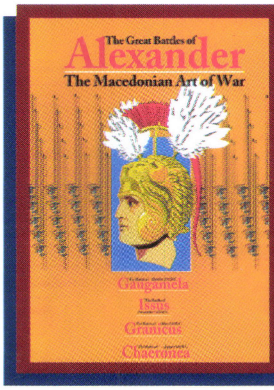
'WE THE PEOPLE' You lead the fledgling forces of the Continental Army, playing your strategy cards to move your troops or gain political control over the colonies, while your opponent deploys the British forces. **$29**



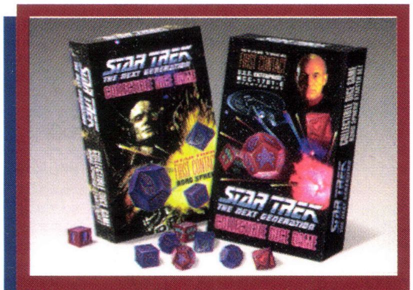
'DIE HANSE' Sail across the length of medieval Europe as a merchant of the Hanseatic League, vying to be the 1st to fill your warehouse with valuable goods. As you battle the North Sea, you encounter pirates and blockades as you make you way home with your valuable goods. English translation included. **$55**



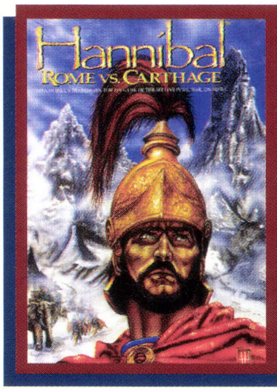
'ENEMY AT THE GATES' Covers the period from Nov. 19, 1942 to mid March 1943. There are numerous two and one map scenarios, covering operations Uranus, Little Saturn, the German Relief, airlift efforts and Operations Star and Gallup (to include Von Manstein's famous "backhand blow"). **$39**



'ALEXANDER THE GREAT' contains four of the famous Macedonian conqueror's most famous and decisive battles, all chosen to highlight the development of the Macedonian Art of War. Use a unique method of resolving conflict that allows gamers to fight the battle and not the system. **$33**



'STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION COLLECTIBLE DICE GAME' Choose from either the U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-E. or the Borg Sphere. Take center seat on the Bridge of the Federation Star Ship or as Commander of the Borg vessel act out their collective mind. **$13**



'HANNIBAL' As a Carthaginian player, you have the incomparable Hannibal to lead your armies of elephants and mercenaries against the mighty legions of Rome. As a Roman you too will have good leaders, as you will fight to hold off the hordes. The entire Mediterranean is your battlefield. **$32**

BOARD GAMES

ANCIENT

4 Battles Anc. World	$21
Alexanders Generals	$33
Ancient Empires	$29
Ancients	$25
Barbarians	$33
Battles Anc. World 2	$25
Battles of Alexander	$33
Caesar CW Dictator	$14
Caesar Civil Wars	$38
Hannibal	**$32**
Siege of Jerusalem	$27
Tahiti	$22

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Give Me Liberty	$22
Rebels & Redcoats 1	$25
Rebels & Redcoats 2	$25
War of 1812	$22

CIVIL WAR

1862 Civil War Quad	$23
1864 Year of Decision	$29
Across 5 Aprils	$23
Antietam Campaign	$25
Aprils Harvest	$24
Army Heartland	$36
Autumn of Glory	$21
Bloodst Day Antietam	$29
Blue & Gray	$25
Campaigns Civil War	$19
Chancellorsville	$34
Civil War	$19
Damn the Torpedoes	$21
Gettysburg	$15
Gettysburg 3 Days July	**$39**
Glory	$30
Hallowed Ground	$42
Here Come the Rebels	$23
In Their Quiet Fields	$22
Ironclads	$32
Longstreet's Assault	$22
No Better Place Die	$24
Raid on Richmond	$21
Roads to Gettysburg	$24
Sam Grant	**$42**
Stnwall's Lst Bttle	$25
Stonewall Jackson Way	$27
Stonewall in Valley	$29
They Met At Gettysburg	$30
Three Days Gettysburg	$49
War of the Rebellion	$28

FANTASY

Challenge Lion Lord	$25
Drag Dice KS5 Swamp	**$6**
Dragon Dice	$9
Dragon Lords	$29
Dragonhunt	$19
Dungeon	$16
Hobbit Adventure	$29
Leviathan	$16
Magic Realm	$23
Titan	$23
WH F Armies Bretonnia	$19
WH F Dark Elf Bx Army	$180
WH F High Elf Bx Army	$190
WH F Orc Box Army	$200
WH F Undead BxArmy	$180
WH Fant Army Wood Elf	$19
WH Qst Catacmb Terror	$29
WH Qst Chaos Warrior	$13
WH Qst Lair Orc Lord	$29
WH Wood Elf Box Army	$175
Warhammer Fantasy	**$50**
Warhammer Quest	$50
Wizards Quest	$17

LEISURE/FAMILY

Assassin	$15
Blind Justice	$19
Candidate	$19
Circus Maximus	$11
Class Struggle	$19
Escape from Colditz	$35
Fast Food Franchise	$29
Formula Motor Racing	$22
Go	$22
Grand Prix	**$19**
Greed	$7
Knightmare Chess	$13
Lunch Money	**$15**
Manhattan	$25
Modern Art	$25
Monopoly Stock Exchge	$9
Outdoor Survival	$17
Power Lunch	$13
Rats	**$24**
Regatta	$19
Robo Rally	$33
Roborly Armd & Dngrs	$25
Settlers of Catan	**$30**
Shark	$22
Sherlck H by Gaslght	**$16**
Sherlock H Westend	$20
Sherlock Holmes CG	$16
Space Chess 3D	**$35**
Stratego	$14
Tyranno Ex	$23
Win Place & Show	$17

BOARD GAMES

MEDIEVAL

Age of Chivalry 2	$27
Crusades II	$28
Cry Havoc	$25
Henry V	$28
Ironsides	$28
Samurai	**$37**
Siege	$22
Viking Raiders	$25

MODERN

2nd Fleet	$24
Across the Suez	$13
Aegean Strike	$19
Central America	$19
Crisis Korea 1995	$29
Crisis Sinai 1973	$25
Flashpoint: Golan	$29
Flight Leader	$21
Harpoon Box Set	**$41**
Light Division	$24
Main Battle Tank	$24
Mid-East Peace	$16
NATO	$13
Speed of Heat	$36

NAPOLEONIC

Battle Dresden 1813	$25
Battles of Waterloo	$33
Emperors First Battls	$25
Emperors of Europe	$33
Empires in Arms	$27
Field Command	$30
Jena	**$38**
L'Armee du Nord	$29
La Bata Mnt St Jn Dlx	$62
La Bata de Ligny	$39
La Bata de Wavre	$22
Napoleaon at Leipzig	$30
Napoleon at Austerlitz	$18
Napoleon's Battles 2	$14
Napoleon's Last Battle	$25
Valmy to Waterloo	$30
Victory at Waterloo	$21
War & Peace	$21

RAILROAD

1835	$40
Advancd Trck Tellurid	$21
Dampfross	$45
Empire Builder	**$25**
Eurorails	$25
Express	$11
Freight Train	$17
Great Western Railway	$36
India Rails	$20
Silverton	**$32**
Tracks to Titicaca	$42
Uncle Hapys Train Gm	$13

BOARD GAMES

SCIENCE FICTION

2038	$34
Awful Green Things OS	$17
BTech Compendium	**$16**
BTech First Strike	$10
Battlespace	$19
Battletech 4th Ed.	$19
Car Wars Deluxe	$21
Citytech	$25
Critter Tek	$12
Fed & Empr Carrier Wr	$17
Federation & Empre Dlx	$38
Merchant of Venus	$25
More Cosmic Encntrs	$26
Necromunda	$44
Ogre Miniatures	$13
SFB Cadet Training Mnl	$7
SFB Cpgn Design Hdbk	$12
SFB Captn Ed.Rulebook	$32
SFB Ship Constrct Manual	$14
SilentDeath Dlx	$42
Space Hulk	**$50**
Space Marine	$50
Space Marine Army Imp	$25
Space Marine Renegade	$22
Space Marine Titan Lg	$50
Space Marine Warlords	$22
Star Fleet Battles	$25
StarTrek 1st Contact	$13
Starforce Terra	$19
Starship Troopers	$29
WH 40K Codex Chaos	$18
WH40K Ork Bx Army	$170
WH40K Tyranid Swarm	$170
Warhammer 40K	**$50**

STRATEGY

Advanced Civilization	$25
Age of Renaissance	$42
Britannia	$19
Civilization	$29
Colonial Diplomacy	**$42**
Coup	$12
Deluxe Diplomacy	$42
Die Hanse	**$55**
Diplomacy	$19
Feudal	$18
History of the World	$27
Kremlin	$14
Lords of Sierra Madre	$34
Machiovelli	$29
New World	$17
Republic of Rome	$29
Risk	$27
Stock Market Game	$19
The New Acquire	$25
We the People	**$29**

BOARD GAMES

VIETNAM/KOREA

Battles Forgotten War	**$36**
Platoon	$15
Rolling Thunder	$22
Silver Bayonette	$15

WORLD WAR I

Aces High	$24
Aces High Amer. Aces	$24
Aces of Aces Pwrhse	$19
Fight For Skies	$21
Great War at Sea 1	**$32**
Knights of the Air	$19
Landships	$27
March to Victory	$40
Richtofen's War	$19
Salvo 2	$21
Wings	$30
World War One	$11

WORLD WAR II

12 O'Clock High	$23
1944 Second Front	$29
ASL Mod Beyond Valor	$33
ASL Mod Code Bushido	$29
ASL Mod Croix de Guerre	$27
ASL Mod Gung Ho	$38
ASL Mod Hedgerow Hell	$15
ASL Mod Hollow Legions	$19
ASL Mod Jatkosota	**$10**
ASL Mod Kampfgpe Peiper 1	$27
ASL Mod Kampfgpe Peiper 2	**$27**
ASL Mod Last Hurrah	$14
ASL Mod Leatherneck	**$9**
ASL Mod Mrch to Obliv	$29
ASL Mod Paratrooper	$15
ASL Mod Partisan	$15
ASL Mod Pegasus Bridge	$24
ASL Mod Red Barricades	$19
ASL Mod Streets of Fire	$15
ASL Mod Yanks	$27
ASL Solo Rules	$29
Aachen	$23
Advanced Squad Ldr	$38
Advanced Third Reich	**$38**
Afrika Korps	$18
Air Bridge to Victory	$17
Air Force	$19
Air Force/Dauntless	$15
Ambush	$24
Ambush/Move Out	$9
Ambush/Purple Heart	$15
Ambush/Silver Star	$14
Anzio	$19
Arctic Storm	$19
Ardennes	$27
Army Group Center	$24
Avalanche: Invsn Itly	$27

BOARD GAMES

WORLD WAR II

Axis & Allies	$33
Axis & Allies Cntrl Pwrs	**$30**
Axis & Allies Max Adv	$10
Axis & Allies Mid Est	$16
Axis & Ally Pls Min 2	$25
Axis & Ally Plst Mini	$25
Axis & Ally WW2	$38
Axis & Ally WW2 Exp	$14
Axis & Ally WW2 Exp 2	$21
Axis & Ally WW2 Exp 3	$37
B-17	$18
Balkan Front	$26
Barbarossa Army Grp S	$42
Battle Hymn Leathernck	$12
Battle for Ardennes	$26
Battle for Germany	$12
Battle for N Africa	$32
Battle of Britain	**$25**
Battle of Normandy	$21
Battle of the Bulge	$16
Battle over Britain	$21
Black Wednesday	$32
Blitzkrieg in South	$29
Blood & Thunder	$30
Blood on the Snow	$22
Bodyguard Overlord	$29
Bold Stroke	$30
Borodino 41	$22
Breakout:Normandy	$23
Britain Stands Alone	$23
Campaign to Stalingrd	$29
Carrier	$27
Carrier War	$25
Carrier War Exp Kit	$11
Carrier War/Plan Orng	$16
Command Sea 1 Rsng Sn	$41
Command Sea 2 Sprmarn	$41
Command Sea Counters	$12
Command Sea Plyrs HB	$5
Command Sea Referee	$9
Command Sea Risng Sun	$9
Command Sea Rules	$15
Command Sea Ship Data	$12
D-Day	$16
Days of Decision 2	$42
Decision in France	**$15**
Drive On Moscow	$32
Eastern Front 2nd Ed	$49
Eastern Front Solitr	$21
Eighth AF Down Flames	**$29**
Empire of Rising Sun	$41
Enemy at the Gates	$39
EuroFront	$29
Europe at War 2nd Ed.	$42
Fire in the East	$58

BOARD GAMES

WORLD WAR II

First Arakan	$18
Flat Top	$29
For Whom Bell Tolls	$54
France 1944	$12
GD 40 Battle Stonne	$30
Golan to Sinai	$16
Guadalcanal	$27
Harpoon Counter Set	$11
Hells Highway	$15
Hitler's War	$15
Hunters from the Sky	$29
Invasion Norway	$30
Krieg!	**$32**
Krieg! Expansion	$9
Last Battle for Grmany	$29
Last Battles 1945	$21
Last Blitzkrieg	$25
Legend Begins Afrika 41	$22
Leningrad	$11
Leros Island Prize	$35
Line in the Sand	$22
London's Burning	$29
Longest Day	$59
Lost Victory	$23
Luftwaffe	$23
Mac Arthurs Return	$31
Main Battle Area	$22
Matankikau	$28
Med Front	$29
Midway	$19
Moscow 1941	**$16**
Mustange Exp Kit	$12
Mustangs	$17
Naval War	$9
No Sailor But Fool	$25
Omaha Beachhead	$12
Operation Mercury	$27
Operation Shoe String	$19
Over the Reich	$30
Pacific War	$37
Panzer Leader	$23
Panzer Leader	$45
Panzerblitz	$19
Panzerblitz 2	$25
Patton's Best	$19
Piercing the Reich	$29
Prelude to Disaster	$26
Raid on St. Nazaire	$19
Red Parachutes	$32
Red Steel	$32
Rise of Luftwaffe	$19
Rommel at Bay	$22
Rommel in the Desert	$27
Rommel's Battles	$16
Run Silent, Run Deep	$24

BOARD GAMES

WORLD WAR II

Russian Campaign	$17
SL Mod Crescendo of Doom	$21
SL Mod Cross of Iron	$19
SL Mod GI Anvil of Victry	$28
Scratch One FlatTop	$22
Seven Seas to Victory	$21
Shell Shock	$24
Sink the Bismarck	$23
Smithereens	$25
Spitfire	$23
Squad Leader	**$23**
Stalingrad Pocket 2	$28
Storm Ovr Arnhem Foli	$12
Tactics 2	$12
Third Reich	$19
Thunder at Cassino	$19
Tokyo Express	$24
Tunisia	$33
Turning Pt Stalingrad	$19
Twilight War	$17
Typhoon! 1941	$37
Up Front	$19
Victory in Europe	$14
Victory in Normandy	$11
Victory in West Frnce	$26
Volga Front	$17
WW2 Pacific Theatre	$33
War at Sea 2 Kit	$13
West Front	$44
World Flames Exp 1	$21
World Flames Exp 2	$17
World Flames Exp 3	$17
World Flames Upgrade	$14
World in Flames Dlx	**$90**

GENERAL WAR

Air Superiority	$9
Alamo	$15
Battle of Alma	$28
Black Death	$9
Blood & Iron	$25
British Empire	$30
Camp.Fredrick the Great	$24
Geronimo	$32
High Ground	$22
Kolin Fredrk Defeat	$34
Lion of the North	$29
Quebec 1759	**$22**
Roarks Drift	$27
Russia At War	$25
Texas Revolution	**$18**
The '45	$25
The Kings War	$30
Thirty Years War Quad	$27
Thundrin Guns	$18
Zorndorf	$36

SPLUS297BR1

Visa, MC and Discover accepted. Checks held 4 weeks. MONEY ORDERS UNDER $200 SAME AS CASH. COD $8. Price, availability, offer subject to change at any time. Hardware orders may require additional shipping and handling charges. Defectives replaced with same product. All sales final. Call for details.

Shipping and handling charges calculated on a per order, per shipment, and per item basis. The "per order" charge is charged once per order placed and the "per item" charge is charged once for each item ordered and the "per shipment" charge is charged once for each shipment we make to you.

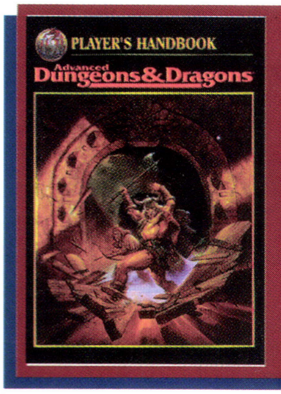
	Standard U.S. Mail 7-10 Days	Priority U.S. Mail 2-3 Days	Federal Express 2 Day	Federal Express 1 Day	Mail To Canada 4-7 Days	Mail To The World 7-14 Days
Per Order	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Shipment	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$4.00	$2.00	$2.00
Per Item	$1.00	$1.50	$2.00	$2.00	$2.00	$6.00

© 1997 CHIPS & BITS, INC.

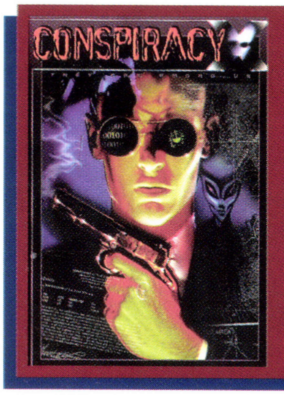
CHIPS & BITS INC.

POB 234 Dept 10842 Rochester, VT 05767
Fax 802-767-3382 Int'l 802-767-3033
Orders/Questions: cbisales@sover.net
Customer Service: cbiserv@sover.net

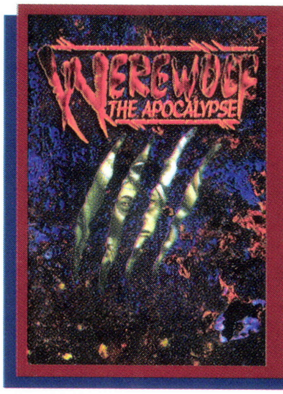
Visit our Online Catalog! www.cdmag.com/chips.html



'ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS PLAYERS HANDBOOK' Here is an indispensible encyclopedia of fantasy role-playing. Create mighty heroes or crafty wizards, unique elves, dwarves, halflings and other races, along with weapons, armor and magic spells to battle supernatural monsters. **$20**



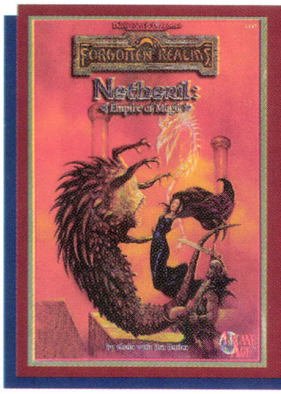
'CONSPIRACY X' takes place ina world of dark secrets and hidden agendas where the only certainty is nothing is what it seems. The president may not be human, and the sign carrying paranoid on the street ranting about CIA mind control satellites may very well be right. You must look between the lies. **$20**



'WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE' These are the final days, the signs are clear. Humans have corrupted the Earth, destroying the trees, slaughtering the beasts, choking the air, poisoning the soil, and clogging the waters. There is no place to hide, the end is upon us. Want to play? **$24**

Gaming Info Online
www.cdmag.com

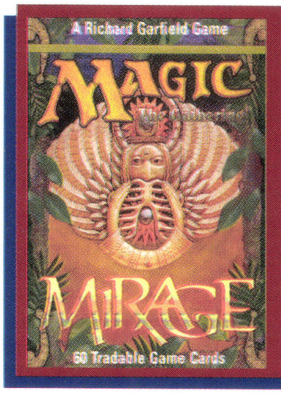
The best gaming info on the web is at *Computer Games Online*. Each day features a NEW article covering all categories from Sims to Sports. Surf to *Computer Games Online* today!



'NETHERIL: EMPIRE OF MAGIC' Journey back 5,000 years, visiting the archwizards of Netheril. View fantastic floating cities, enclaves of magic that shook the ground far below. Travel to a time when magic was raw and powerful, when spell casters stood supreme in the eyes of their nation. **$25**

WDC 6302
$2.95
BATTLETECH
Do you have what it takes to survive?

'BATTLETECH' is a 30-foot tall engine of destruction bristling with enough firepower to level a city block and you're in drivers seat. Welcome to 31st century where war is a way of life and every hard fought battle brings you closer to your destiny.. **$2.50**



'MAGIC THE GATHERING: MIRAGE' On Dominaria lies the lush continent of Jamuraa, a land filled with people and creatures.The majestic civilization within boasts magical traditions dating back countless eons. Beneath the burning sun, what power can you draw from the potent forces. **$8**

AD&D NOVELS

BIRTHRIGHT	
The Falcon & The Wolf	$5
The Hag's Contract	$5
The Spider's Test	$5
War	$20
DARK SUN	
Cerulean Storm	$5
Darkness Before Dawn	$4
Nomad	$4
Outcast	$4
Rise & Fall of Dragonking	$5
DRAGONLANCE	
Companions	$5
Darkness and Light	$5
Dawning of a New Age	$5
Doom Brigade	$20
Dragon of Summer Flame	$20
Dragonlance 2nd Generation	$5
Dragonlance Chronicles	$14
Dragonlance Legends	$13
Dragons of Summer Flame	$6
Kindred Spirits	$5
Knights of the Sword	$5
Leaves: Inn of Last Home	$16
Love and War	$5
Murder in Tarsis	$16
The Dragons	$5
War of the Lance	$4
FORGOTTEN REALMS	
Cormyr: A Novel	$20
Crown of Fire	$5
Darkwalker on Moonshae	$5
Daughter of Drow	$5
Elminster: Making of Mage	$5
Legacy	$5
Masquerades	$5
Murder in Cormyr	$17
Murder in Halruaa	$16
Passage to Dawn	$20
Prince of Lies	$5
Siege of Darkness	$5
Sojourn	$4
Starless Night	$5
Stormlight	$5
Streams of Silver	$5
Tangled Webs	$17
Veiled Dragon	$5
Waterdeep	$5
PLANESCAPE	
Abyssal Warriors	$5
Blood Hostages	$5
Pages of Pain	$17
Planar Powers	$5
RAVENLOFT	
Carnival of Fear	$4
Death of a Darklord	$4
Heart of Midnight	$4
I, Strahd	$14
King of the Dead	$5
To Sleep with Evil	$5

FANTASY RPGS

AD&D 2ND EDITION RULES	
AD&D Core Rules	**$54**
Combat & Tactics	$17
DM Guide	$16
DM Rules High Lvl Cmpgn	$17
Monstrous Manual	$20
Players Handbook	$20
Skills & Powers	$17
Spells & Magic	$19
AD&D ACCESSORIES	
Arms & Equipment Guide	$15
Book of Artifacts	$17
Castle Sites	$11
Castles 3D Set	$20
Character Record Sheet	$9
Compl Bk Villians	$15
Complete Necromancer	$15
Complete Ninja	$15
DM Screen	$6
Den of Thieves	$14
Encyclopedia Magicas EACH	$20
Player Packs EACH	$16
I, Tyrant	$15
Monst Comp Annl 3	$18
Priest Spell Cards	$17
Sages & Specialists	$17
Sea Devils	*$17*
Shaman	$11
Tome of Magic	$17
Wizard Spell Compendium 1	**$21**
World Bldr Guide	$17
AD&D ADVENTURES	
Dragon Mntn Dlx Adv	$25
Eye of Pain	$6
Eye to Eye	$11
Four from Cormyr	**$17**
Gates Firestorm Peak	$17
Rod of Seven Parts	$27
AD&D AL-QADIM	
Cities of Bone	$15
Corsairs of Great Sea	$15
Golden Voyages	$15
Land of Fate	$16
Sha'irs Handbook	$15
AD&D AUDIO	
Hail the Heroes	$13
Joshuans Almanac	$11
Karameikos	$25
Mystara DM Survival Kit	$10
Red Steel	$25
AD&D BIRTHRIGHT	
Book of Magecraft	$17
Cities of Sun	$15
Domain Sourcebooks	$7
Havens Great Bay	$17
Legacy Kings Campaign	$25
Legends HeroKings	$17
Naval Battle Syst	$10
Rjurik Highlands	$17
Warlock Stonecrowns	$9

FANTASY RPGS

AD&D DARK SUN	
City by Silt Sea	$20
Defilers & Preservers	$14
Merchnt House Amketch	$13
Mind Lords Last Sea	$17
Psionic Artifacts	**$17**
Thri-kreen of Athas	$13
Windridrs of Jagged Clifs	$13
AD&D FORGOTTEN RLMS	
Faiths & Avatars	$18
Heroes Lorebook	$17
Netheril Empire Magic	**$25**
The North	$21
Undermtn Trilogy 3	$6
Vilhon Reach	$14
Volo Gde All Thngs Magicl	$17
Warriors & Priests of Realm	$18
AD&D MONSTROUS COMP	
Annual'95	$15
Mystara Monst Comp	$15
Planescape Monst Comp 2	$15
Ravenloft App 3	$15
AD&D PLANESCAPE	
Campaign Setting	$25
Doors to the Unknown	**$11**
Guide Astral Plane	$13
Harbinger House	$11
Hellbound	$21
On Hallowed Ground	$21
Planewalker's Handbook	$17
Something Wild	$11
AD&D RAVENLOFT	
Bleak House	$21
Childrn of Night: Vampre	**$13**
Death Ascendant	$11
Death Unchained	$11
Forged of Darkness	$11
Guide to Transylvania	$11
Requiem: Grim Harvest	$25
ARS MAGICA	
Adventure Value Pack	$16
Ars Magica 3rd Ed	$20
Faeries	$15
Medieval Handbook	$16
Mythic Places	$9
Shaman	**$10**
Wizard's Grimoire	$15
CASTLE FALKENSTEIN	
Book of Sigils	$14
Castle Falk Soft	$19
Castle Falken Hard	$25
Comme Il Faut	$12
Lost Note Da Vinci	$14
Memoirs of Auberon	$17
Six Guns Sorcery	$17
DICE POLY MEGATUBES	
Opaque Set	$3
Pearlescent Set	$6
Transparent Set	$5
Twinkle Set	$6

FANTASY RPGS

DICE SPECIALTY DICE	
Armor Die	$1
Critical Die	$1
Fumble Die	$1
Hear Noise Die	$1
Hit Location Die	$1
Weapon Die	$1
DRAGONLANCE FIFTH AGE	
Dragonlance 5th Age	$21
Heroes of Steel	$15
Last Tower Raistlin	**$17**
EARTHDAWN	
Creatures of Barsaive	$15
Denizens 2	$15
Earthdawn	$25
Earthdawn Companion	$15
Gamemasters Pack	$11
Infected	$9
Magic	$15
Prelude to War	**$13**
HARNWORLD	
Castles of Harn	$13
Dead of Winter	$10
HarnWorld 2nd Ed.	$15
Nasty, Brutish & Short	$13
HARNMASTER	
GM's Guide 2nd Ed,	$16
Players Guide 2nd Ed.	$16
Tome Grey Mysteries Spells	$6
Tome Shek-Pvar Magic Syst	$10
MERP 2	
Accessory Pack	$14
Arnor Combat Suppl	$25
Campaign Guide & Map	$17
Combat Screen	$8
Creatures Middle Earth	$17
MERP 2 Softcover	$17
Treasure Middle Earth	$17
Wizards Companion	$10
PENDRAGON	
Beyond Wall Pendragon	$10
Blood & Lust	$14
Land of Giants	$18
Pagan Shores	$14
Pendragon 4th Ed.	$19
Perilous Forest	$14
Savage Mountain	$14
SKYREALMS OF JORUNE	
Gire of Sillipus	$12
Jorune Frein Ramian	$10
Scholari Pack	$14
Skyrealms Jorune 3rd Ed.	$17
Sobayid Atlas	$15
WARHAMMER FANTASY	
Apocrypha Now!	$11
Doomstones 1	$18
Dying of Light	**$12**
Enemy Within 2	$13
Realms of Sorcery	$15
Warhammer Fantasy	$19

HORROR RPG

CALL OF CTHULHU	
Call of Cthulhu	$18
Cthulhu Live	**$15**
Encyclopedia Cthulhiana	$10
Keepers Compendium	$11
Stars are Right	$16
The Golden Dawn	$13
CHANGELING	
Changeling	$21
Freehold & Hidden Glens	$13
Immortal Eyes 3	$13
Kithbook: Trolls	$11
Player's Guide	$19
CHILL	
Accessory Pack	$12
Chill	$19
Companion	$15
Unknown Province	$13
MAGE	
Book of Shadows	$15
Fragile Path Testmnts	$10
Hidden Lore 2nd Ed.	$13
Loom of Fate	$10
Mage 2nd Ed.	$21
Mage Tarot Deck	$21
VAMPIRE	
Book of Kindred	$9
Book of Nod	**$8**
Chicago Chronicles 3	$17
Clan Books EACH	$10
Dice	$5
Elysium Elder War	$13
Hunters Hunted	$10
The Dark Ages	**$24**
Vampire 2nd Ed.	$24
Vampire Player Guide	$19
WEREWOLF	
Axis Mundi Bk Spirits	$15
Bastet	**$15**
Tribebooks EACH	$10
Dice	$5
Freak Legions	$12
Storytellers Handbook	$15
Werewolf	$24
WORLD OF DARKNESS	
Combat	$13
Gypsies	$13
Midnight Circus	**$13**
Outcasts Play Guide Parian	$13
WRAITH	
Artificers	$11
Character Kit	$10
Dark Kingdom Jade	$13
Dark Reflect Spectre	$10
Dice	$5
Player's Guide	**$10**
Sea Shadows Storyteller	$11
Shadow Player Guide	$15
The Risen	$11
Wraith	$24

SCI-FI RPG

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS	
Bubblegum Crisis	$20
CONSPIRACY X	
Aegis Handbook	$17
Conspiracy X	$20
Cryptozoology	**$15**
Devil in Deep Blue Sea	$7
GM Screen	$13
Nemesis	$14
CYBERPUNK 2020	
Chromebook 4	$9
Grimm's Cybertales	$15
Listen Up Prim Screwhd	$9
When Gravity Fails	$12
Wildside	$12
FADING SUNS	
Byzantium Secundus	$15
Fading Suns	$22
Forbidden Lore	$13
GM Screen	$10
GURPS	
Autoduel	$15
Compendium	**$18**
Dinosaurs	$15
Fantasy Folk	$16
GURPS Rulebook	$20
Goblins	$18
Robots	$14
Vehicles	$16
HEAVY GEAR	
Badlands Sourcebook	$17
Character Compendium	$20
GM Starter Kit	$25
Heavy Gear	$25
Northern Vehicle Comp	$20
Southern Vehicle Comp	**$20**
Tactical Field Sprt	$16
Technical Manual	$15
MECHWARRIOR	
Living Legends	$10
Mechwarrior	$13
Mechwarrior Companion	$12
RIFTS	
Dimnsn Bk 2 Phase Wrld	$17
Mercenaries	$14
Rifts	$21
Sourcebook 3 Mindwerks	$11
World Book 13	**$14**
ROBOTECH	
Invid Invasion	$11
Robotech	$11
Sentinels	$14
Zentaedi	$7
SHADOWRUN	
Awakenings	$13
Companion	$13
Grimoire 2nd Ed.	$13
Missions	**$12**
Threats	$15
Virtual Realities 2.0	$15

SCI-FI RPG

STAR WARS	
Classic Adv 1	$15
Galaxy Guide 12	$13
Gamemaster Handbook	$15
Live-Action Adv	**$15**
Mini Battles Start Set	$28
StarWars Revised	$25
TRAVELLER	
Aliens Archives	$18
Central Supply Catalog	$18
First Survey	$18
Milieu 0: Third Imprium	$18
Starships	$18
Traveller	$22

CARD GAMES

Battletech
Dr Who
Great Dalmuti
Illuminati
Magic Gathering Alliances
Magic The Gathering Mirage
Magic The Gathering Visions
Middle Earth
Monty Python Holy Grail
Mythos
Netrunner
On the Edge
Star Trek
Star Trek TNG
Star Wars
Wyvern
X-Files

VHS ANIME

3x3 Eyes Perfct Collctn	$16
8Man After Perfct Collctn	$16
Area 88	$16
Akira	$16
Akira Letterboxed	**$24**
Arcadia of My Youth	$35
Babel 2 Perf Collctn	$16
Battle Angel	$16
Big Wars	$26
Black Magic M-66	$12
Blue Seed 7	$21
Bubblgum Crash 3	$16
Bubblgum Crisis 8	$16
Bublgum Cris Collct Subtitled	**$155**
Burn Up W	$17
Burn Up!	$17
Casshan Perfect Collctn	$16
Cutey Honey	$28
Cyber City Oedo Dud Pk	$45
Dagger of Kamui	$35
Dancougar 8	$18
Deluxe Ariel 2	$26
Devil Hunter Yokho	$25
Dominion Tank Police	**$16**
Dragon Half	$25
Evangelion 3	$21
Genocyber 1	$23
Ghost in the Shell	**$16**
Giant Robo 5	$12
Girl From Phantasia	$25
Gunsmith Cats	$17
Guyver Bundle	$112
Guyver Data 8	$10
Here is Greenwood 3	$22
Iria	**$24**
Junk Boy	$16
Lodoss War	$16
Lodoss War Gift Box	**$75**
Luna Varga	$25
Macross 2 Bundle	$55
Megami Paradise 2	$25
Moldiver	$15
Oh My Goddess	**$12**
Power Dolls	$17
Project A-ko 4	$16
Princess Minerva	$25
Robotech	**$12**
Slayers	$15
Super Atragon 2	$21
Venus Wars	$16
Zenki	$21

SPLUS297BR2

© 1997 CHIPS & BITS, INC.

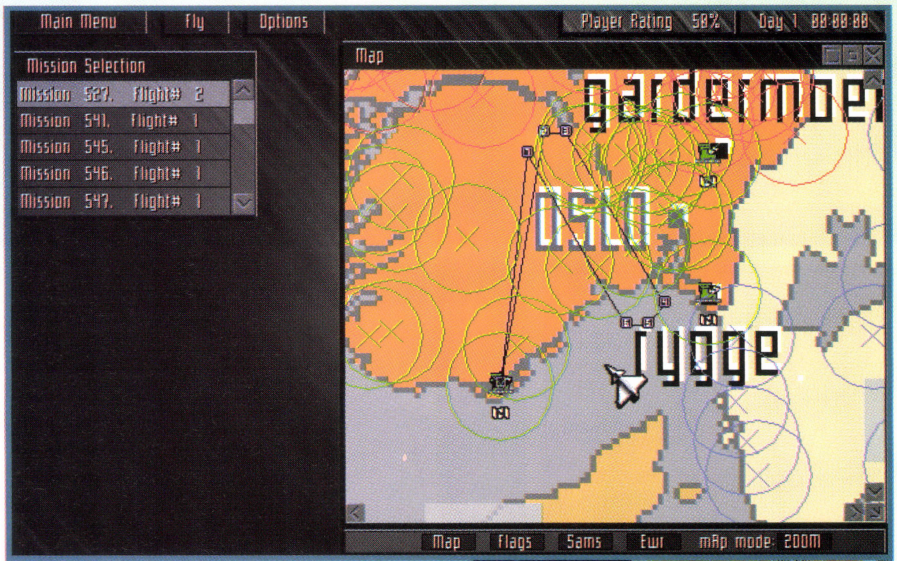
by Steve Wartofsky

The Hangar

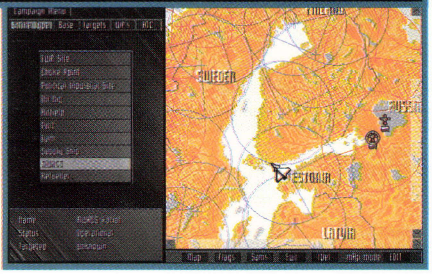
The challenges of the dynamic campaign engine

Well, it looks like things are about to change dramatically; the number of air combat simulations shipping with dynamic campaign engines in the next few months will far outweigh the number arriving with scripted missions. Seems the days of the scripted sim are almost over, at least for now. Interactive Magic's *iF-22*, MicroProse's *Falcon 4.0*, Empire's *Flying Corps*, and of course DID's continuing efforts in their *TACTCOM* add-on to *EF2000* and *SuperEF2000* (the whole package for a Windows 95 environment) are just some examples of upcoming sims which will have dynamic campaign and/or mission engines.

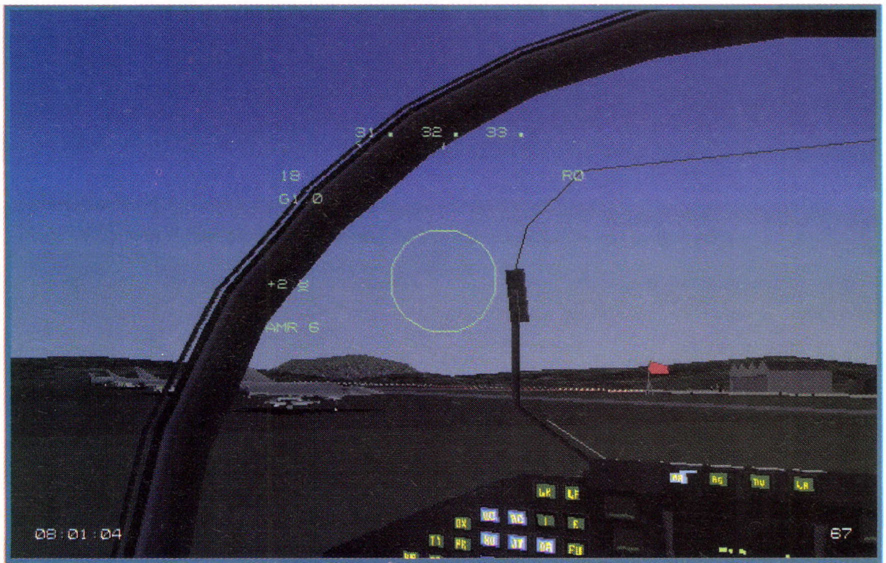
As we've discussed before, the reason many air combat simulation designers have gone for scripted missions recently has been that the scripts give the designers more control over what happens during a mission. Unit detection and weapons systems can be programmed to respond in ways which remain plausible and consistent, and the computer's reactions to player input can be handled rigorously.



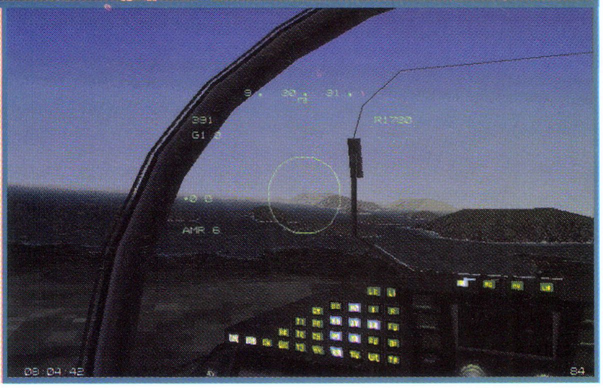
▲ Once you zoom in close, you'll see your waypoints, which you can then edit for fine-tuning of your mission



▲ A new, sophisticated set of displays gives you good graphic indication of radar coverage from the ground



▲ Look carefully for the windsock as you taxi towards the runway; one of many little touches characteristic of an in-depth design



▶ The virtual cockpit in EF2000 is certainly one of the best-looking out there right now; and with the HUD display locked to your view, it stays informative even as you scroll around

With a dynamic mission generator or campaign engine, you're working with a very different kind of beastie. The goal is "realistic randomness," which means you have to move over from a logic which is essentially black-and-white to one which operates in shades of grey. Too much randomness and, of course, air and ground units counter the player's actions with performance well outside the range of what they're supposed to do. Further, the computer-controlled units may cluster, may arrive in formations either too large or too small to be typical in real-world combat situations, may locate themselves in terrain they can't deal with, may start off with a mission profile completely different from the one they'd run in the real world given their capabilities. Too little randomness and the player is going to run into the same kinds of situations over and over again, with insufficient variation to make it worthwhile spending the time and effort putting together the necessary AI to work a dynamic mission or campaign. The balancing act here, in this component alone, is thus an extremely tricky one.

TIME TO FINISH THE JOB, TIME TO GO...

BACK TO BAGHDAD™

"The closest you'll get to an F-16 cockpit without enlisting." Computer Gaming World

" In the cockpit, the F-16's targeting and radar systems are so precisely simulated it makes you wonder if Military Simulations breached security to create them." Computer Life 8/96

"Without a doubt, the avionics in BTB are some of the most detailed available." Computer Player

"Military Simulations has lovingly crafted the most realistic simulation of the F-16..." PC Gamer

COMPUTER PLAYER CP RECOMMENDED

SPOT IMAGE®

WDOIRGKISTHAOLP LIMITED

MultiGen Inc. THE REALTIME 3D COMPANY

FAAC INCORPORATED

MILITARY SIMULATIONS, INC.
201 N.E. Park Plaza Drive Suite 50
Vancouver, WA. 98684
PHONE (360)254-2000 FAX (360)254-1746
http://www.military-sim.com

ENTER TO
WIN
A TRIP TO
MOSCOW FOR
A RIDE IN A
MIG-29!

some computer
game magazines
just follow the herd.

being just
like the
others is
good enough
for them.

step out of the herd and subscribe now.

that wouldn't be
good enough for us.
no initiative.
no brains.

Computer Games Strategy Plus has exclusive previews, intelligent reviews, and expert tips. in-depth coverage from people who know gaming from the inside out.

follower or leader?

you choose.

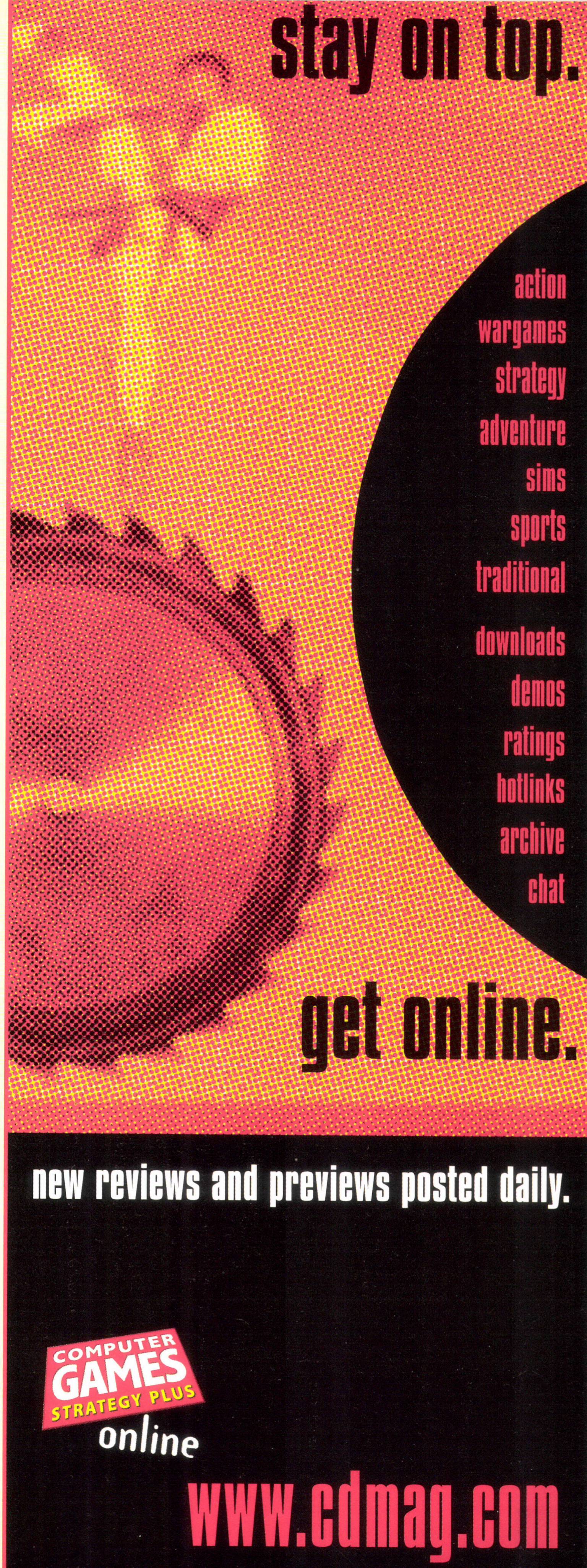
call, fax,
or fill out
& mail the
card on the
next page.

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS

even better with cd-rom

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS ADVERTISERS' INDEX

Page Number(s)	Advertiser	Web Site Address
19	3DO	www.3do.com
74-75	7th Level	www.7thlevel.com
125	Access	www.accessoftware.com
126-127	Accolade	www.accolade.com
99	AnyRiver	www.anyriver.com
69	Arsenal	www.arsenalpub.com
105	Artworx	www.frontiernet.net/~artworx
78	Bethesda	www.bethsoft.com
9	Blue Byte	www.bluebyte.com
13	Broderbund	www.koalalumpur.com
117	CH Products	www.chproducts.com
109	Chips & Bits - Adult	www.cdmag.com/chips.html
96-97	Chips & Bits - PC	www.cdmag.com/chips.html
70-71	Chips & Bits - RPG	www.cdmag.com/chips.html
42	Chips & Bits - Video	www.cdmag.com/chips.html
63	CodeFusion	www.digi4fun.com
4-5	Davidson	www.davd.com
55, 61	GameTek	www.gametek.com
119	Graphic Simulations	www.graphsim.com
2-3, 57-59	GT Interactive	www.gtinteractive.com
25,85	Interactive Magic	www.imagicgames.com
10-11, 21, 29, 49, 65, 77, 79, 81	InterPlay	www.interplay.com
107	Legend	www.legendent.com
83	Megamedia	www.megamed.com
7	Microprose	www.microprose.com
47, 89	Microsoft	www.microsoft.com/games
113	Military Simulations	www.military-sim.com
Backcover	Mindscape	www.mindscapegames.com
38-39, 67	New World	www.nwcomputing.com
17	Novalogic	www.novalogic.com
129	NRI Schools	
14-15	Playmates	www.playmatestoys.com
43	Schwerpunkt	www.ghgcorp.com/schwerpt
27, 101	Segasoft	www.segasoft.com
53	Sierra On-Line	www.sierra.com
36-37	Sir-Tech	www.sir-tech.com
45, 87	SSI	www.ssionline.com
43, 114	Strategy Plus	www.cdmag.com
80	Sybex	www.sybex.com
107	Take Two	www.take2games.com
30-31	Talonsoft	www.talonsoft.com
22-23, 50-51, 130-132	Virgin	www.vie.com
22-23, 50-51	Westwood	www.westwood.com



stay on top.

action
wargames
strategy
adventure
sims
sports
traditional
downloads
demos
ratings
hotlinks
archive
chat

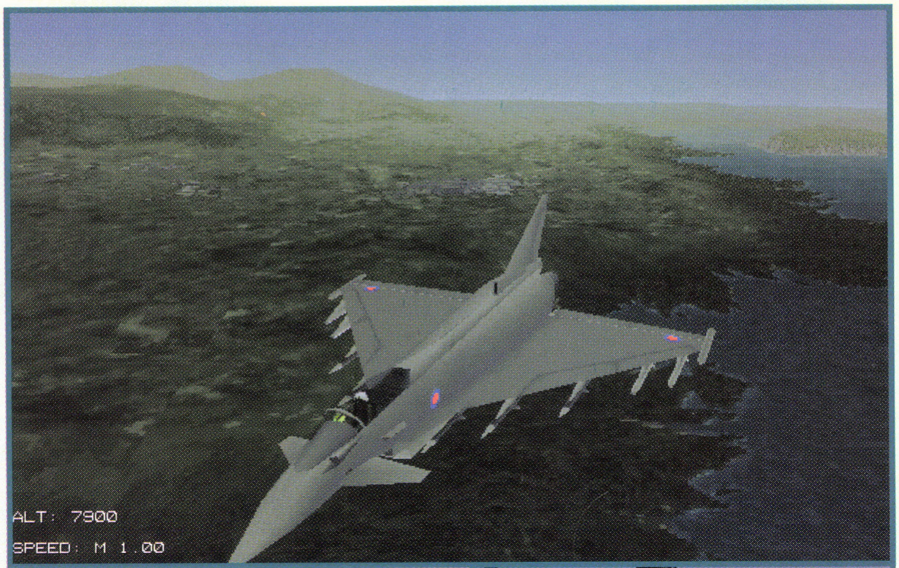
get online.

new reviews and previews posted daily.

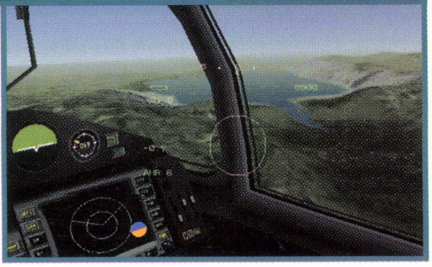
COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS online

www.cdmag.com

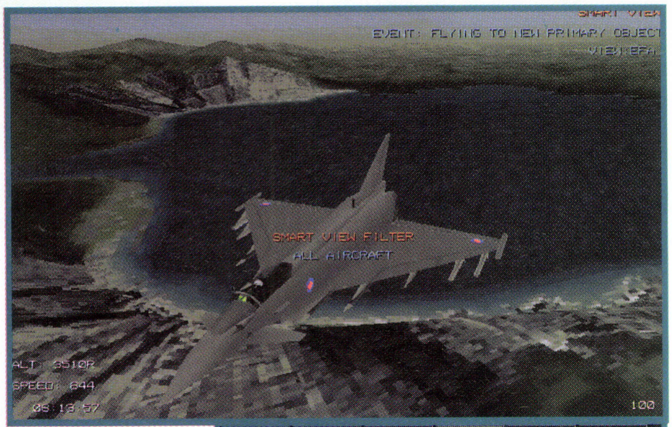
Nevertheless, DID has done well with *EF2000*, despite the program's initial flaws in all the areas of dynamic performance mentioned above. The version 2.4 patch included with the *TACTCOM* add-on does so much extensive work tweaking weapons performance, unit performance, unit reaction to player performance, etc., that it leaves the player with the impression that managing this kind of engine is an almost endless process of revision. Resolve problems in one area – control the randomness which has gone out of bounds by player standards – and you then have to check up and make sure you haven't increased randomness in another area of the design. The process must be, at one level, an almost nightmarish effort of detail work, on a level which designers must fear players might never see nor care about. The work in *TACTCOM* is extensive, and not only revises almost all the major elements of the campaign engine at this level, but also includes a full-scale mission planner, multi-player support, and a means of checking up on other parts of the campaign theatre while in-mission.



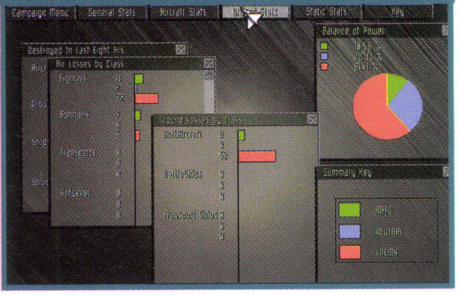
▲ **The external view gives you a little information here; wouldn't it be great if the player could sort and organize as much flight info as desired from an external view, though?**



▶ **Sometimes, with the right view, this thing is about as real-looking as you could imagine any PC-based air combat simulation could get; planned 3Dfx support in future (currently available only as a stripped-down, OEM Demo) should resolve any lingering frame rate issues**



▲ **Here's a view of the SmartView system**



▶ **Improved campaign debriefs give you more information, about your wingman's performance as well as your own, as well as about the progress of the overall campaign**

One of the amazing things *TACTCOM* does to help the player understand just what *is* going on in such a dynamic engine is provide the SmartView display. With a simple set of commands – Shift-V and Shift-F – the player gains complete control over the "smart camera" external view, which chooses aircraft of interest based on the assigned filter. The smartcam can be selected to display just your flight, all aircraft during your mission, just your mission, all allied aircraft, all enemy aircraft, or just neutral aircraft in the area. Once the filter is chosen, the camera selects the aircraft of highest interest, i.e. where the greatest likelihood of interaction is going on, and then not only displays an external view of the action, but also a complete run-down of information on what the aircraft are, and what their current task is. The advantage of having all these computer-generated external views is that it gives you a much greater sense of the status of the overall campaign while on-mission. Since you don't have a full radio communications system to tune in on what's happening in other parts of your theatre, in the past you had no way of knowing while on mission whether or not it might be a good idea to head off and give an assist to a separately tasked mission instead of just flying merrily home with your remaining ASRAMs. Now you do. If you see action elsewhere, using the SmartView system, it helps you decide and prioritize your own tasks. It's also just plain fun to watch.

The mission planner gives the player an intuitive, easy-to-use system for designing missions, to customize performance during play; the software will do a thorough check upon completion of a mission design (which, due to the graphic interface, is a simple process of point-and-click) to make sure no major pieces or decisions have been left out. With the planner, the player can now explore all the different mission profiles of the EF2000 in depth, without having to worry about just passively accepting what the computer offers during a campaign; once you've made your own choices about support missions and tasks as well, you then have much more involvement with finding out how those support missions have gone (which you do with the SmartView system).

What *TACTCOM* is pointing to, however, is just how much work can still be done to make the campaign theatres in an air combat simulation come alive. It's not enough just to provide numerical calculations of force disposition, chances of detection and destruction, and then update this as a way of including a "campaign" with a sim; with all of the projects slated for release so far in '97, you'll have more and more access to a full-scale, real-time campaign combat *system*, part of which is your aircraft's performance and mission and role within that system. Should Wargen2, via *TACTCOM* and *SuperEF2000*, and the other dynamic campaign engines on the way prove successful in producing this kind of in-depth, dynamic, real-time campaign, the genre of air combat simulation will have once again been the first to break significant new ground, to be picked up later by games in other genres. In other words, if you like real-time tactical or strategy games…you ain't seen nuthin' yet. ■

FLIGHTSTICK PRO
Throttle
THROTTLE
PRODUCTS

Sure, there are cheaper PC and Mac game controllers. But if you're ready to get serious, you need the high-quality, built-to-play-rough peripherals from CH Products.

When you're ready to get serious, you're ready.

Our joysticks, throttles, flight yokes, rudder pedals, and other controllers are born in the USA, and made to take the heat of any battle, race or game you throw their way. So put on your game face, get down to your computer dealer and grab the game controllers made for serious players.

FlightStick Pro (PC & Mac)
FlightStick
Force FX
CH Gamepad (PC & Mac*)
CH Pedals (PC & Mac*)
Pro Pedals
F-16 FighterStick (PC & Mac*)
F-16 CombatStick
F-16 FlightStick
Pro Throttle (PC & Mac*)
CH Throttle
Virtual Pilot Pro (PC & Mac*)
Virtual Pilot
Gamecard 3 Automatic

*Coming soon.

Visit our web site!
http://www.chproducts.com/

CH PRODUCTS
970 Park Center Drive • Vista, CA 92083
Phone 619 598 2518 • Fax 619 598 2524
http://www.chproducts.com/
America OnLine: Keyword: CH Products
CompuServe: Go GAMEDPUB

Available at: American ADO Inc.• American TV • Best Buy • Bits & PC's • Circuit City • Computer City • Computer Express • Comp USA • Computerware • Egghead • Electronics Boutique • Elek-Tek • Fry's Electronics • The Good Guys • Incredible Universe • Infotel • Ingram Micro • J & R Computer World • Jetstream • Lechmere • Media Play • Micro Center • Montgomery Wards Electric Avenue • Nobody Beats the Wiz • Office Max • PC Connection, Inc. • PC Tronic • Ricom Electronics Ltd. • Sears • Software & More • Software Plus Ltd. • Susteen • Ultimate Electronics • United CD-ROM • Wal-Mart by Ben Chiu

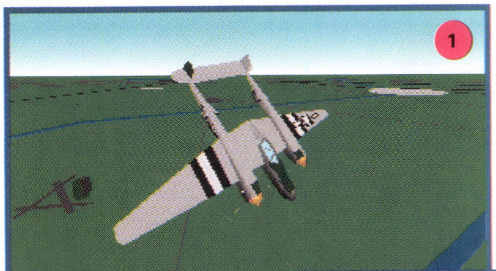
Air Combat Advisor

Part Two: Boom & Zoom

In continuing our tactics discussions, let's talk more about BnZ considerations before we move to the nuts and bolts.

E and the enemy

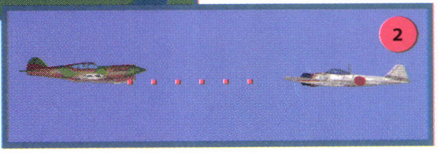
Impatience is the most common cause of BnZ failure. If you recall our discussions on vertical maneuvering and E, you know that altitude is the preferable form of E at the start of a fight fought on your terms. Many new pilots get either caught off guard with bandits closing on them before they've stored enough E, or are too anxious to get into battle and "dive in" before they're really ready. My best advice is, don't be in such a hurry to get shot down. Sure, if you're flying an on-line game (or if your flight time is limited by "real life"), you're looking to get the maximum combat per hour in, but getting shot down repeatedly isn't worth the on-line charge, either. Finally, the number of enemy aircraft in the area will dictate how you should BnZ, something we'll discuss. However, as always, we'll keep things simple this time, with a 1v1 BnZ situation.



[1] From a position of an absolute E advantage, you'll dive on your (ideally) unwitting opponent. As always, you need to consider your aircraft's limitations and sim's particular flight modeling. This will determine your dive angle and attack options. If your aircraft will rattle apart at high speeds or aerodynamic compressibility causes you to lose control, you may not want to dive at a steep angle. It is for these reasons, not all aircraft make superior BnZers and not all sims will let you BnZ to any great advantage over your opponents. Never the less, an E advantage will almost always benefit your situation in all but the most simplistic sims

Dive, dive, dive!

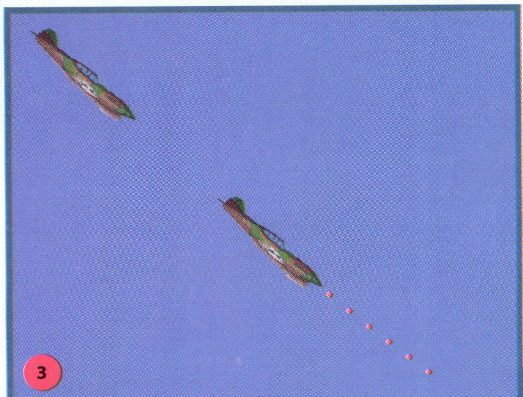
From a position of an absolute E advantage, you dive on your (ideally) unwitting opponent. Where he is in relation to you and how he is oriented will determine the danger potential, as well as how you may want to carry out the dive. However, before we go on to that, as always, you need to consider your aircraft's limitations and sim's particular flight modeling. This will determine your dive angle and attack options. If your aircraft will rattle apart at high speeds or aerodynamic compressibility causes you to lose control, you may not want to dive at a steep angle. It is for these reasons that not all aircraft make superior BnZers and that not all sims will let you BnZ to any great advantage over your opponents. Nevertheless, an E advantage will almost always benefit your situation in all but the most simplistic sims.



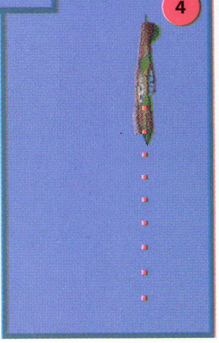
[2] The level, high speed, head-on is dangerous because you can be shot at and collisions are a very real possibility. This is because your bullet vector is usually almost identical to your flight vector in level flight. But if you're behind the bandit, this is an excellent attack (he can't shoot at you and you have the E advantage). Unfortunately, a good opponent won't show you his six intentionally

The attack run

This is the "fifth" step I referred to last time. The traditional BnZ lines you up for a head-on level pass at your opponent or a hi slashing (about 45 degrees or so) attack. Each of these has its problems. Of course, as we already know, the level, high speed, head-on is dangerous because you can be shot at and collisions are a very real possibility. This is because your bullet vector is usually almost identical to your flight vector in level flight. However, for what it's worth, the benefit is that you are not expending E flying level. While you can do the figure eight with the nose and attack from a slight angle, etc., generally, what we just said remains true never the less. With the hi slashing attack, you cause guns solution problems for yourself. As the enemy flies under your nose, you'll tend to increase your dive to spray bullets on him. This will increase your airspeed and most likely cause an additional loss of potential E as well. Less than ideal, but it still has advantages. First, it makes your opponents shot at you harder – so you're on even ground here. However, if the bandit tries to climb to meet you, even though he's gaining potential E, he's slowing down – which can make him an easier target.



[3] With the hi slashing attack, you cause guns solution problems for yourself. As the enemy flies under your nose, you'll tend to increase your dive to spray bullets on him. This will increase your airspeed and most likely cause an additional loss of potential E due to the increased dive angle



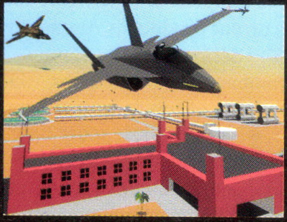
[4] The vertical attack run comes in very handy with on-line AirWarrior, but it will work in other sims as well. The greatest benefit is your target usually cannot shoot at you without a large loss of speed. In addition, your targets options are limited and all remain in visual sight during your attack. Regardless of where he tries to run, you'll see it and make flight adjustments accordingly

Up and down

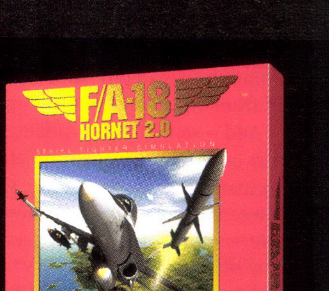
In addition to the "traditional" attack runs, you have the vertical BnZ and what I call the "lo slashing" attack. The vertical attack run comes in very handy with on-line *AirWarrior*. This is because the aircraft modeled in on-line *AW* have a modified "hit bubble" that does not count every hit made head-on. In other words, you need to attack aircraft from any angle other than head-on to receive maximum hit potential. This makes head-on, level attacks a very tough way to get kills there, so let's talk more about the benefits of the vertical attacks. The greatest is your target usually cannot shoot at you without a large loss of speed. If he raises his nose to do so, he will bleed E, which may make him more of a sitting duck for your next pass if his dive acceleration is poor. In addition, your target's options are limited and all of them remain in visual sight during your attack. Regardless of where he tries to run, you'll see it. However, just as with most things, there are drawbacks. First and foremost, you have to watch your speed closely. You'll lose E like crazy if you're not careful. Any time you move the nose of your airplane, you lose E. As we've discussed previously, the further you dive, the more total E you'll lose. That is why you'll want to keep your dives as short as possible. More coming. ■

REACH OUT AND TORCH SOMEONE.

F/A-18 HORNET



The hottest flight simulator game is now torching up your Windows® 95 PC. It's F/A-18 Hornet. With incredible 3-D graphics and realistic instrumentation, it'll push you to the outer limits then bring you screaming back to earth. In fact, F/A-18 Hornet closely simulates the Navy's own attack-fighter aircraft. There's 28 different Persian Gulf combat missions to test your skills — where you can blow up everything from ammunition depots using the M61 Vulcan cannon to MiG fighters with an AIM9 Sidewinder. So pick up the award winning F/A-18 Hornet today. It's the best way to get close to someone.



GRAPHIC
SIMULATIONS
CORPORATION
www.graphsim.com/graphsim

An underdeveloped disappointment

Jetfighter III

Mission Studios

DOS

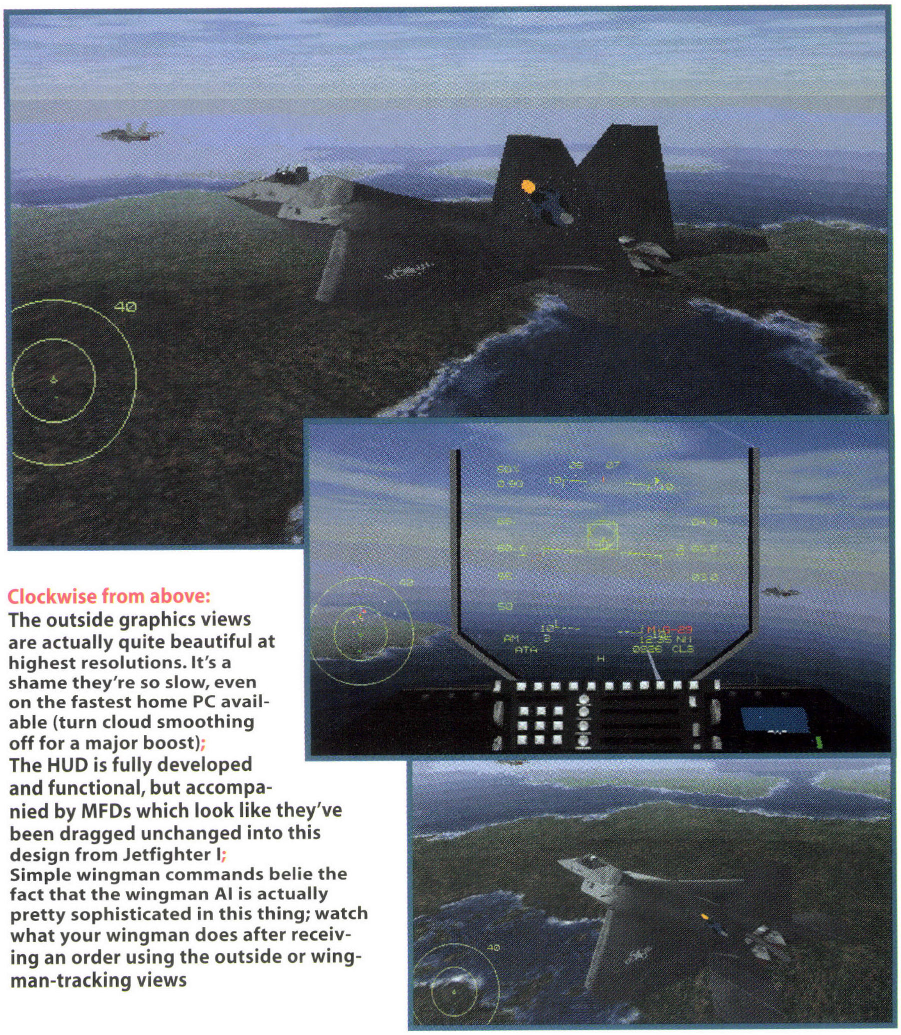
★★½☆☆

While there's no question every bit of dedicated effort has gone into the development of this simulation, in the final analysis, the results are disappointing. Technically, there are many things in the design to admire. You have more plotted real-world terrain here than is present in any other simulation, and the designers have been very careful to provide enough variety in the texture-mapping to avoid the kinds of repetitive imaging some other simulations with prettier terrain graphics suffer from. Real-world plotting of cities, roads, airports is solid and accurate. Control over resolution mode, horizontal screen size and graphics options in-flight mean you can fine-tune the visuals to perform optimally on your system (though with *everything* turned on in highest resolution and full screen, this product chugs even on a Pentium Pro 200 with a super-fast video card!). Once graphics speed is brought under control, you'll notice your sense of speed with distance from the ground is more accurate here than in any other simulation to date. The flight model is probably the best one out there for an F-22 simulation at the moment, and is considerably more subtle than most in this genre. The sensation of approaching the ground and *feeling* like you're going 200+ knots is unique. While the missions are scripted, there's enough dynamic processing going on that each mission will turn out differently each time through, so flying the scripted missions (or the campaign) isn't the usual arcade-game exercise it can turn into with such designs. During a mission, you'll hear communications both from your wingman and from other units, indicating combat status. And – something surprisingly absent in many otherwise serious simulations – full information on plane altitude, speed, heading is present in all the outside views.

Nevertheless, with all that going for it, many other features are, for want of a better word, underdeveloped. The weakest area of the design is in the control interface. If you have a programmable joystick, you can set it up to handle the commands necessary to make the joystick function relatively realistically. Otherwise, at least in review here, testing out the CH Flightstick Pro with supposed hat support resulted in unusual and unintuitive functionality. Worse, however, is that the joystick setup and calibration – something which should be rock-steady reliable in any sim these days – is not only virtually identical to the one found in *Jetfighter II* of many years ago, but it's also unreliable. In the test setup here, problems were found trying to create and then sustain rudder pedal functionality. Throttle control proved way too sensitive even with changes in "dead zone" and recalibration. Ultimately, then, you're best off flying *Jetfighter III* the way you did *Jetfighter II* – with a relatively simple joystick setup and keyboard control of throttle and rudder.

Related (oddly enough) to input control is sound; again, in a test setup with joystick and throttle/pedal both enabled, engine sounds would cut out with the throttle at 20% or less (this problem is avoided by using keyboard for throttle and pedals). Sound support is also touchy if you install under Windows 95 – best off to do a "pure" DOS install to avoid headaches in this area.

The more you play this simulation – getting past the frustrations with control, with comparatively slow graphics update (*F-22 Lightning II* and *EF2000* do 640x480 terrain graphics substantially faster, with more developed MFD avionics available at the same time, though at least in the former case with substantially simpler AI for opponent air and ground units), with a front end which, while it's fun the first few times through, starts to get really tedious really quickly – the more you'll start to recognize an approach to air combat simulation shared with the company's previous product. Once you recognize the *Jetfighter II* in *Jetfighter III* and accept the current product as essentially an updating of the design, mission, flight modeling and combat goals of the prior product, there's plenty of fun to be had here. The sad thing is, with just a little more time and resource spent on providing 3D hardware support (planned for an upcoming mission disk), better control interface support, and higher-quality sound support, this simulation could have been a highly successful, cutting-edge effort. Perhaps further developments will help push the design forward. Meanwhile, make sure you have a good return policy if buying *Jetfighter III*, and take some time as well to decide whether you can overlook its shortcomings enough to enjoy the product.– *Steve Wartofsky*



Clockwise from above:
The outside graphics views are actually quite beautiful at highest resolutions. It's a shame they're so slow, even on the fastest home PC available (turn cloud smoothing off for a major boost);
The HUD is fully developed and functional, but accompanied by MFDs which look like they've been dragged unchanged into this design from Jetfighter I;
Simple wingman commands belie the fact that the wingman AI is actually pretty sophisticated in this thing; watch what your wingman does after receiving an order using the outside or wingman-tracking views

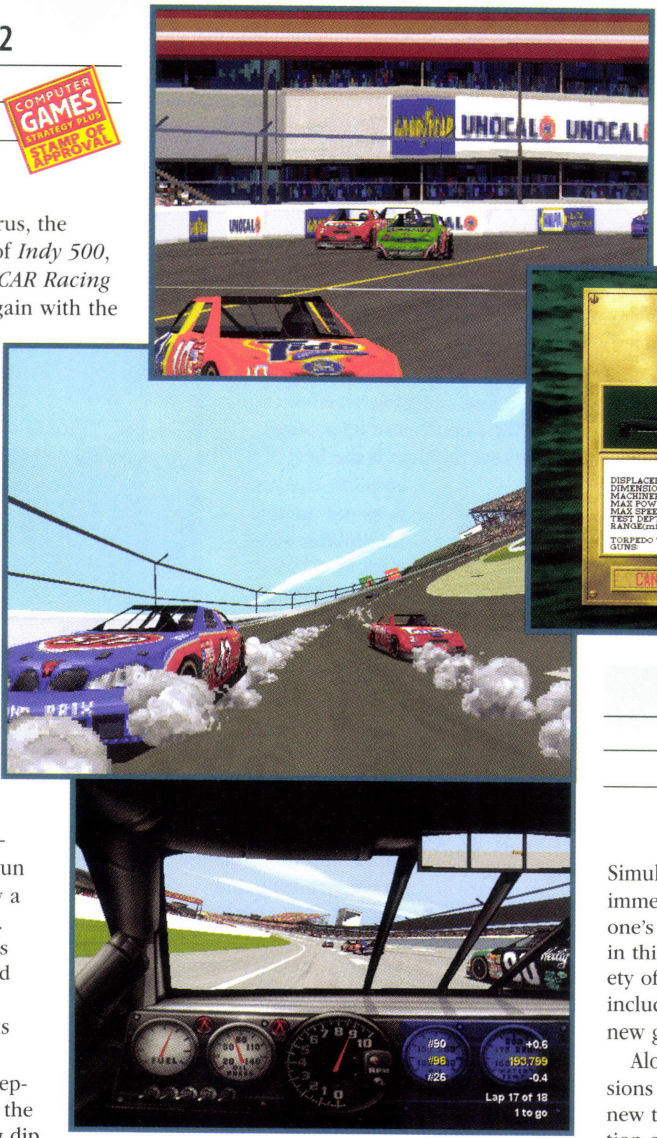
NASCAR Racing 2

Sierra

DOS

★★★★★

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL



▲ **NASCAR Racing 2**

Was there ever any doubt? Papyrus, the perennial racemasters/creators of *Indy 500*, *IndyCar Racing 1 & 2*, and *NASCAR Racing* have set a new standard once again with the release of the sequel, *NASCAR Racing 2*. Just like the predecessors of the company's other sims, this simulation is more an evolutionary succession than a revolutionary product. Only this time, they seem to have most everything right.

Like the previous game, both VGA and SVGA graphics are supported. While there are claims being made that the graphics are faster than ever, that actually requires some clarification. The game runs only slightly faster than the original. However, the graphics are not only markedly more detailed, there are more on-screen objects as well. It can be run with all details enabled with nary a slowdown on a 166MHz Pentium. Included on the single CD-ROM is support for Rendition *Verité* based video cards.

16 tracks are included with this release, and all have received facelifts. The track artwork is exceptional. Although the variations in the track surface such as the banking dip in the Carousel are noticeably absent, and other details such as guard rails appearing where chain link fences are located, everything still has an authentic feel to it. The colors and landscapes are extremely accurate. But let's get to the cool stuff.

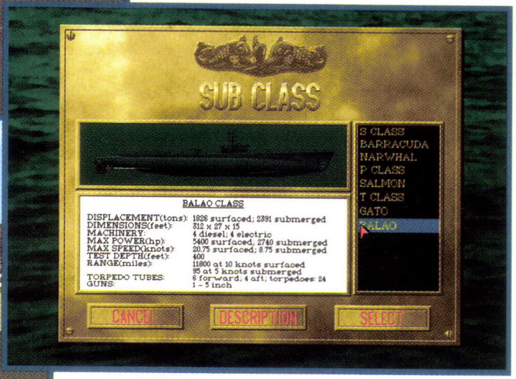
Of the new features in *NASCAR Racing 2*, the addition of the Spotter/Crew Chief voices are most notable. The effect of this virtual race crew is fairly convincing, and really immerses you in the game. While sometimes annoying, he is more often helpful. Other changes include an interface "de-cluttering" of the setup screen. Car setup has been simplified as well. You no longer have to deal with tire stagger, or fuel levels (although you can adjust fuel at practice sessions). However, you *are* able to change such things as pit stall locations and the number of competitors (most are slightly short of actual). You're also able to add your own photo to the drivers list of the actual drivers from the 1996 NASCAR season.

The game has included the ability for novices to just jump in and be competitive. This arcade mode adjusts the AI level of competing drivers so they don't get too far ahead or fall too far behind. Moreover, they won't try and drive through you anymore. Car modeling has been tamed as well. You can actually hunker down and drive these cars. While the car models have been somewhat simplified, you no longer feel like you're ice-skating, a useful trade-off. In fact, this is where the new version really shines. Rather than being left in limbo where you either dominate or get blown into the weeds, this is more of a serious driver's sim. You can actually draft and rub fenders with the big dogs without feeling like you're about to spin into the wall if you blink. However if you do (or enable the random failures option), there's an (invisible) tow truck which will take you back to the pits.

Perhaps the strongest feature of the this package is its modem, serial, and eight player IPX network play (only one copy of the game is required for distribution across a LAN). At 9600 baud, it was only a shade slower than the IPX mode, which was transparent. A free five hour trial to TEN is also included, so you can race head-to-head against up to 30 other players online.

So what is there not to like? You can't adjust controller travel rates or speed sensitivity, and your pit crew is not animated. Hardly anything to gripe about. While other racing simulations require you to be an engineer, this one is *the* driver's sim. Now that sounds like fun. *–Ben Chiu*

▼ **Silent Hunter Patrol Disk**



BALAO CLASS

DISPLACEMENT(tons): 1826 surfaced; 2391 submerged
DIMENSIONS(feet): 312 x 27 x 15
MACHINERY: 4 diesel; 4 electric
MAX POWER(hp): 5400 surfaced; 2740 submerged
MAX SPEED(knots): 20.75 surfaced; 8.75 submerged
TEST DEPTH(feet): 400
RANGE(miles): 11800 at 10 knots surfaced
95 at 5 knots submerged
TORPEDO TUBES: 6 forward; 4 aft; torpedoes: 24
GUNS: 1 – 5 inch

Silent Hunter Patrol Disk

SSI

DOS

★★★★☆

Simulations, like strategy games, can profit immensely from a good add-on disk. This one's probably one of the best ever to show in this category; it provides an immense variety of additions to the original, and with the included patch, makes *Silent Hunter* a whole new game.

Along with the fifteen new historical missions and two new patrol zones come two new types of missions for the campaign portion of the game, Photo Recon and Life Guard Duty. The former is self-explanatory; when the mission is received via radio, the player must find and then photograph key targets. The latter gives the player an opportunity to engage in another, less-well-known function of submarines, rescuing survivors. In the missions provided here, the player will have the opportunity to watch air strikes on a target, and then head in and perform rescue missions for downed pilots. Pilots remain viable targets for only a short period, after which they are either captured by the enemy or become food for the fishies (hypothermia was as deadly a killer in WWII as any shark).

These additions, combined with lots of nice little subtle improvements (at night, your internal views are now lit red; subs can now fight subs in the campaign; convoys now take evasive action, en masse or sometimes individually, upon detection of your sub's presence; etc.) make the *Patrol Disk* a must-have for any regular players of this simulation. If you haven't tried a sub simulation yet, you'd do best to check this one out – *with* the add-on. If there's any chance you'd enjoy the hunt-and-hide, sneak-attack rhythms of this kind of game, you'd certainly discover it here. *–Steve Wartofsky* by John Nolan

Flight Simulator for Windows 95

A Day in the Life

The new Flight Simulator is more than a switch to the Windows 95 operating system. It brings new aircraft, new airports and improved scenery. The B-737 allows PC pilots to create and fly a typical day in the life of an airline pilot. Here's an actual four day trip for a Dallas B-737 crew, taken from the schedule of a major U.S. airline:

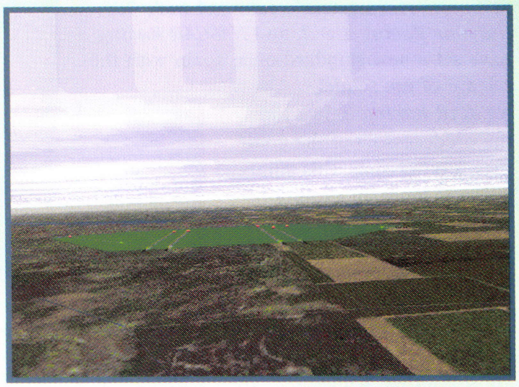
Day	Flight	Departs	Arrives	Time	Total	On Duty
A	1149	DFW 1315	BNA 1455	1.40		
	1249	BNA 1555	LUK 1752	0.57		
	202	LUK 1845	PHL 2012	1.27	4.04	7.27
B	1459	PHL 0900	ATL 1118	2.18		
	1427	ATL 1335	MCI 1440	2.05		
	1683	MCI 1530	LUK 1801	1.31		
	1041	LUK 1900	IND 1949	0.49	6.43	12.19
C	2173	IND 0725	LUK 0813	0.48		
	2190	LUK 0905	GRR 1008	1.03		
	559	GRR 1050	LUK 1152	1.02		
	559	LUK 1245	MSY 1339	1.54	4.47	8.44
D	1419	MSY 0700	LUK 0953	1.53		
	696	LUK 1115	IAD 1223	1.08		
	1898	IAD 1400	LUK 1519	1.19		
	2085	LUK 1635	DFW 1757	2.22	6.42	12.27
				TOTAL	22.16	

Huh? Speak English, You Fool!

Some decoding may be in order for non-airline types. The trip is flown daily, so days are named alphabetically. Time is in hours and minutes for each leg and the daily total. The duty day is the time from sign-in to release. At release, you get a company-supplied hotel room until the next sign-in. The three letter identifiers are shorthand for the airport name. Here's the Secret Decoder ring:

DFW = Dallas/Ft. Worth Intl.
BNA = Nashville Intl.
LUK = Cincinnati Muni-Lunken Field
PHL = Philadelphia Intl.
ATL = Atlanta/Hartsfield Intl.
MCI = Kansas City Intl.
IND = Indianapolis Intl.
GRR = Grand Rapids-Kent County Intl.
MSY = New Orleans Intl.
IAD = Washington/Dulles Intl.

CVG (Cincinnati Intl.) is not in the airport database, so LUK was substituted. LUK is close to CVG, so flight times are not affected. It gives you a bit of a challenge; the longest runway, 02R, is only 6102 feet. No problem for a 737 if you pay attention, but it's shorter than usual.



▲ The FLUF (Fat Little Ugly Football) launching at DFW. In it's early years some joker would always transmit "Nice Punt" over the tower freq when you took off

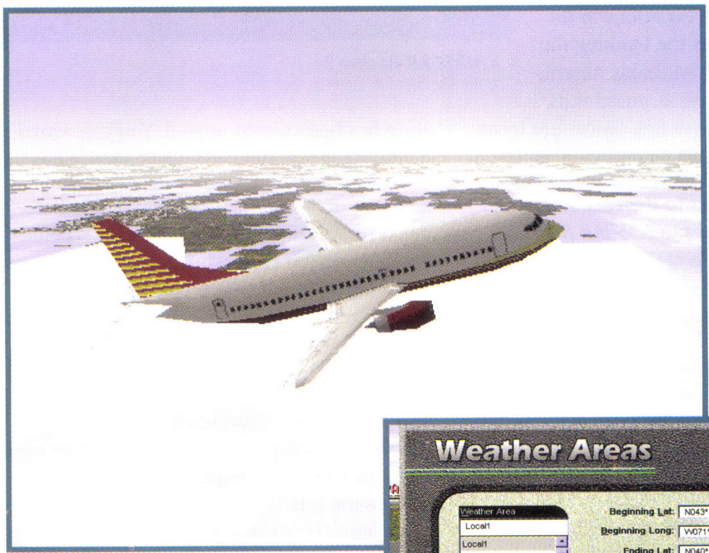
Preflight: the key to a successful, fun mission

Normally, you'd be on the road for four days. Let's not make it quite that much fun. Try the first day of the rotation and add some weather to make the flights more interesting.

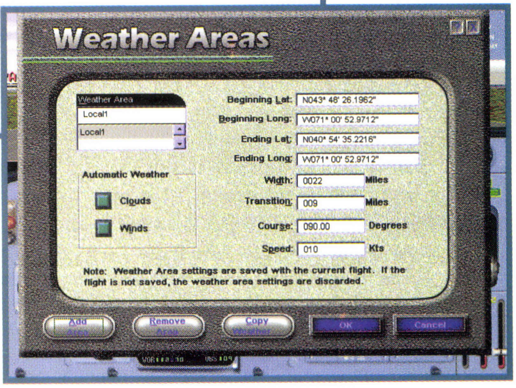
The first problem is the lack of a co-pilot. The sim does not provide multiplayer support. You'd have trouble finding another sim addict who wanted to spend seven hours on-duty, anyway. There's a reason the B-737 is a two-pilot airplane, so optimize your control systems as a substitute. A programmable combination set-up (like the CH Pro Throttle and Combatstick) is an ideal replacement for a First Officer. You can program the CH duo in minutes; then raising the gear and tuning the radios can be accomplished with the click of a button. It might be quicker than asking your F/O to do it! Besides, you'll never be trapped in a tiny cockpit with CH controls that had a huge plate of frijoles for lunch!

At the opening screen, click Fly Now, select the B-737 from the Aircraft/Select Aircraft menu. Then from the World/Go To Airport menu, move to the North American Scenery Area and pick Dallas/Ft. Worth 36L.

Next, create a weather area. For maximum control of the weather, select "Use Advanced Weather Dialog" from the Preferences Menu. Go to the World/Weather Areas menu, click Add Area and name it 737. You'll have to type in the Lat/Long coordinates for the beginning and end of the weather area. Use N 33 40 21



▲ Cruising above the weather keeps the whitecaps out of the coffee. Don't go through the boomers or you'll be writing letters to defend yourself from the passenger lawsuits



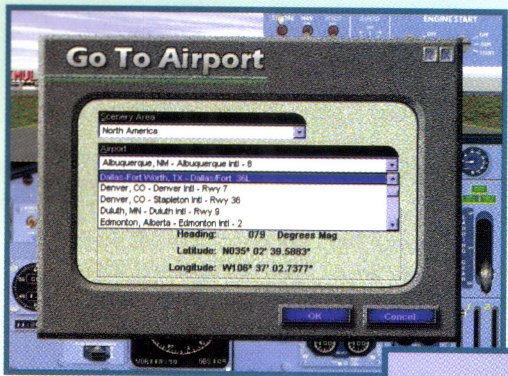
Beginning Lat: N043° 48' 26.1962"
Beginning Long: W071° 00' 52.9712"
Ending Lat: N040° 54' 35.2216"
Ending Long: W071° 00' 52.9712"
Width: 0022 Miles
Transition: 009 Miles
Course: 090.00 Degrees
Speed: 010 Kts

Note: Weather Area settings are saved with the current flight. If the flight is not saved, the weather area settings are discarded.

▶ Creating weather areas is more difficult than it needs to be; expect a change in the future. Still, weather adds a lot to this program and it's worth the effort

/ W 86 54 00 for the beginning and N 36 56 00 / W 86 27 00 for the end of the area. Make it 500 miles wide, with a 10 mile transition. Set the course and speed to 030 at 15 knots. This produces a weather area from Birmingham to Bowling Green, covering the approach to Nashville. Now from World/Weather, select Add Layer and put in clouds. A good first layer will be Stratocumulus, Broken 7/8 coverage from 800 to 3700 feet. Add a layer of Altocumulus, Broken 6/8 coverage from 6000 to 9000 feet. The last layer will be Cumulonimbus, Dense coverage from 10000 to 19000 feet with heavy turbulence. If you wish, add winds and restrict the visibility using the other Advanced Weather options.

The last setting to adjust is in the World/Time & Season menu. The rotation described above was part of the November flying; your takeoff time is 1315 local. Set the time and season accordingly.

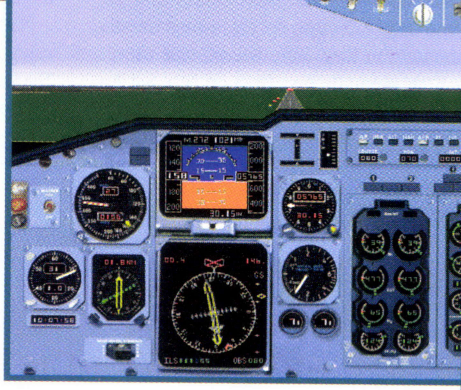


Scenery Area
North America

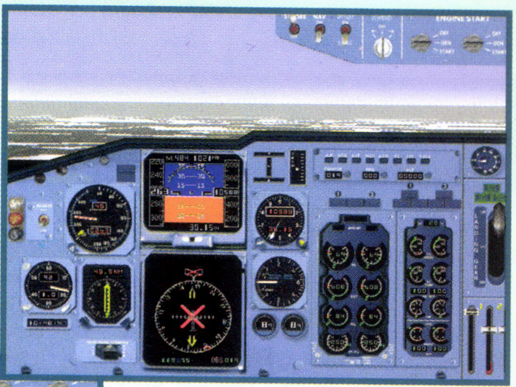
Airport
Albuquerque, NM - Albuquerque Intl - 8
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX - Dallas/Fort 36L
Denver, CO - Denver Intl - Rwy 7
Denver, CO - Stapleton Intl - Rwy 36
Duluth, MN - Duluth Intl - Rwy 9
Edmonton, Alberta - Edmonton Intl - 2

Heading: 079 Degrees Mag
Latitude: N035° 02' 39.5883"
Longitude: W106° 37' 02.7377"

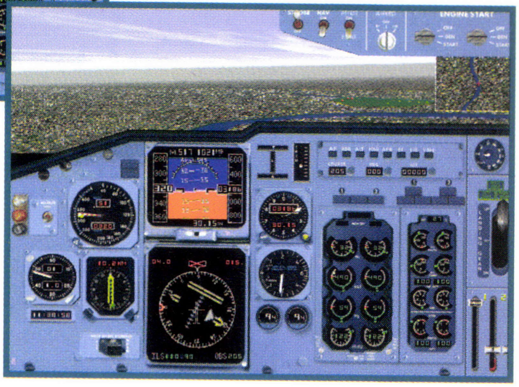
▲ The database includes over 300 airports and a huge number of VOR's. They still don't have all the U.S. navigation facilities though



▶ The autopilot isn't perfect, so don't trust it. This landing by "George" would have ended in the grass without pilot intervention



▲ If you tune a Nav radio and no data block appears, you are out of range. FS has unrealistically limited reception to about 80 miles. At high cruising altitudes it should be at least twice that



▼ Finding LUK is easy if you stay on the south side of the river while cruising east. About 14 miles from CVG you'll see a smaller river running to the North that takes you right to the runway

We're going, weather or not!

You'll need a flight plan. The following departures, routings and arrivals use old published procedures. They are the real thing but are non-current. DO NOT use them in actual flight; they are for simulation use only. Cruise at .75 Mach.

The routing for this leg is the Dallas 7 Departure to Texarkana, Jet 131 to Little Rock (LIT 113.9), Jet 66 to Memphis (MEM 117.5), the Graham 2 Arrival to Nashville using the ILS 20R. Leaving DFW, fly a 350° heading, climb and maintain 5000'. Reaching 5000', turn right heading 120° and intercept the DFW (117.0) 067° radial outbound. Established on course, climb and maintain FL 330. Due to the unrealistically short range of VOR's in *FS95*, switch to Sulfur Springs (SLR 109) at 74 DME DFW and continue on a 067° course. At 80 DME SLR, you are over Texarkana, which isn't in the database. Switch to LIT and hold a 070° heading until you receive it, then proceed direct. Over LIT, fly the 072° radial to 55 DME. Select MEM and fly the 076° course inbound. At MEM, intercept the 067° outbound to the 73 DME fix. Tune GHM (111.6), and fly the 066° course inbound. You're cleared to descend at 60 DME past MEM; cross GHM at 11000' and 250 knots. Over GHM, fly the 080° outbound and descend to 4000'. At 30 DME from GHM, maintain your present heading and tune the 02R ILS (109.9, 019° inbound). Intercept the ILS and you're cleared for the approach. Decision height is 799'; land and clear the runway and do the After Landing Check.

Pucker up, it's a short runway...

Leave BNA at 1555 local, using runway 02R. The clearance is the Nashville 6 departure, J39 to Louisville (IIU 114.8), V5 to Cincinnati (CVG 117.3), direct LUK. After departure, turn left to 350°, intercept the BNA (114.1) 026° outbound. Climb to 5000'. Established on the radial, climb and maintain FL330. At 70 DME switch to IIU and set the 024° course inbound. At 30 DME prior to IIU, begin descent to 10000'. Passing IIU, intercept the 037° outbound. Nerve intersection is the 38 DME fix on this outbound radial; cross Nerve at 10000' and 250 knots. At Nerve, tune in CVG and intercept the 037° course inbound. Continue inbound to the Bayvr fix at 6 DME; descend to be at 4000' at Bayvr. Reaching CVG, turn to a 065° heading for LUK which is about 14 miles from the VOR. Descend to 2000'. When you have the runway visually, you are cleared for a visual approach to 02R. Remember it's short, so don't float.

Last leg to the layover

Depart LUK at 1900 local for the hop to PHL and the layover. The routing is Appleton (APE 116.7), Bellaire (AIR 117.1), Johnstown (JST 113.0) and the Bucks 1 Arrival to PHL, ILS 9L. You're cleared to depart runway 20L, turn left immediately to a 055° heading, climb and maintain FL 330. When receiving APE, cleared direct. Over APE, turn to 105°, select AIR and proceed direct. Over AIR, turn 080° and go direct when receiving JST. The Bucks 1 starts at JST; intercept the 096° outbound to 40 DME. This is Cofax intersection; you are cleared to descend. Be at 11000', 10 miles west of Lancaster (LRP 117.3). From Cofax, you have 88 miles to get down; that's plenty. At Cofax, switch to Harrisburg (HAR 112.5) and proceed in on a 101° course. Take the 117° radial out of HAR to LRP. Remember, it's 11000' 10 west of LRP. Crossing LRP, you're cleared to descend to 8000' on the 104° radial outbound. Be level at 8000' by the 26 DME fix. At 26 DME, turn right to a 145° heading and descend to 2100'. You're cleared to intercept the localizer for the ILS 9L (108.95, 085° course) and cleared for the approach when established on the localizer. Decision height is 214'.

OK, head for the hotel! That was a typical day for a 737 pilot. Remember, if you use the Options/Simulation Rate menu to speed up the cruise legs, that's cheating! ■

Something fishy this way comes...

They're ba-a-a-ack and they're biting. Sierra just popped open the livewell and hauled *Trophy Bass 2* up on to the dock. This sequel improves the game in many areas, and adds significant new features.

Review
Trophy Bass 2 ★★★★★
Sierra · Windows

The obvious change is the addition of five new lakes, for a total of ten. As before, all accurately model existing lakes known for great bass fishing. The lunkers now have much larger brains; AI has been improved. You won't find potential fish filets scattered randomly around the lake. They'll be in the structure preferred by their species, determined by the fishing conditions. It's also easier for fish to throw the hook and get away. You can even snag your lure now, though it's not hard to work the lure free. The only thing missing is a bunch of mosquitoes.

The "How To" section, a wealth of fishing information, gets updated full motion video clips from four famous bass pros. This section includes facts about fish, and tips on equipment. It contains about 20% more content than the previous version.

The biggest improvement is the addition of a multiplayer mode. The game supports modem, network and Internet play. Now you've got to outsmart the computerized bucketmouths and simultaneously out-fish your human opponents before time runs out. Internet play is on the Sierra Internet Gaming System. If you have Internet access and a Windows 95 Internet Browser, you can fish on-line tournaments. At present, tournaments are limited to 15 competitors; Sierra says SIGS will eventually support 100 bass-boaters. Some people snicker at the thought of on-line bass fishing tournaments. Don't knock it 'till you've tried it, though; it's a major blast, even though the fish don't explode.

Trophy Bass 2 is a winner if you're in the market for something a bit different from the usual shoot-em-up simulation. – *John Nolan*

Review
The Art of Fly Fishing ★★★★★
Philips Interactive Windows

For any avid fisherman, *The Art of Fly Fishing* seems a natural impulse buy. In reality, it's a classic case of "See Sickness." One look, and it's back to shore for Dramamine.

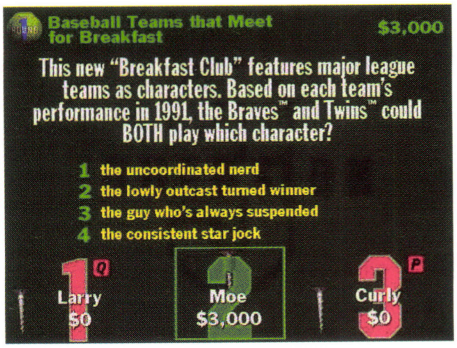
Not that it's all bad, mind you. The three different fishing spots of the British Isles look truly magnificent, and the motion effect of the water is unparalleled. In addition, the ambient nature sounds, in conjunction with the animation, really bring back memories of camp outs, fish feeds, and introspective moments of serenity amidst the other four hundred fisherman duking it out for space on the riverbank.

The entire gallery of information included in *Fly Fishing* encompasses a pitifully small amount of text. A smattering of uninteresting jargon on fly fishing techniques spans across a crude and confusing interface.

Sad to say, the tournament game fares no better. Decent reels and rods remain unavailable until after winning several tournaments. Decisions about lure, line weight, and time of day have virtually no effect on bite action.

Worst of all, the game requires lightning-quick reflexes to master hooking the big one. Huh? In a *fishing* simulation? Similar to *Links,* users must click at the right moment on a rapid-rising slider bar to cast, then again when fish get near. The rest of the saga involves clicking to reel in, and… you guessed it… clicking in time to net your catch.

The world needs *The Art of Fly Fishing* like it needs a documentary on the life and times of Mr. Yuk. There are other fish in the electronic sea. Interested parties should steer the bow towards *Trophy Bass 2,* because this fishin' hole is 100% "catch and release." – *Tim Royal*

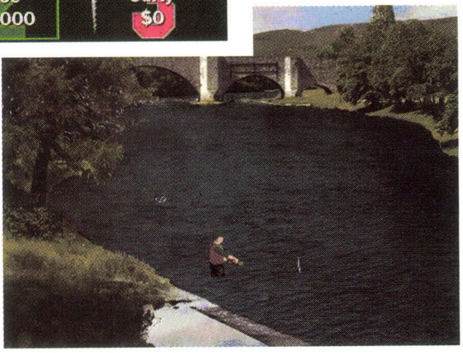

Baseball Teams that Meet for Breakfast $3,000

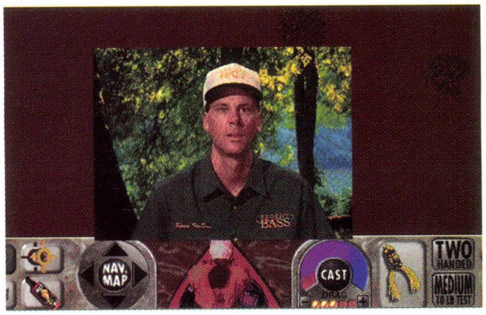
This new "Breakfast Club" features major league teams as characters. Based on each team's performance in 1991, the Braves™ and Twins™ could BOTH play which character?

1 the uncoordinated nerd
2 the lowly outcast turned winner
3 the guy who's always suspended
4 the consistent star jock

1 Q Larry $0
2 Moe $3,000
3 P Curly $0

▲ You Don't Know Jack! **Be careful when you "Screw Your Neighbor" because a correct answer means you're the one who's screwed**


▲ The Art of Fly Fishing: **Nothing comes between a fisherman and his... rod**



▲Trophy Bass 2: **Having trouble getting a nibble? Get timely tips from the pros while you fish in full motion video**

COMPUTER GAMES STRATEGY PLUS STAMP OF APPROVAL

Review
You Don't Know Jack! Sports ★★★★★
Berkeley Systems Windows, Macintosh

You think you know sports trivia, don't you? You think you know all the stats, dates, and names, right? You think you know Mickey, Arnie, and Magic, but you know what? You Don't Know Jack!

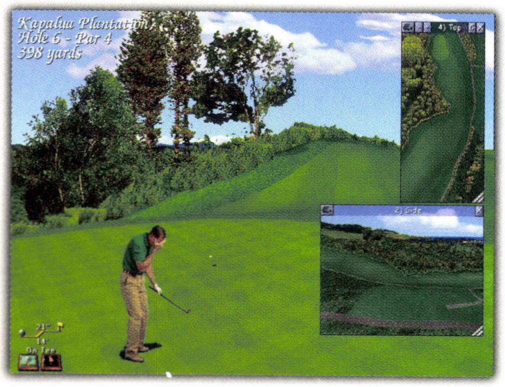
You Don't Know Jack Sports is the latest in their line of entertainingly irrelevant trivia games for your home computer. *Sports* retains the same fun and outrageous gameplay while changing the question topics and atmosphere to reflect the subject at hand: sports trivia.

The game offers 800 questions (including categories like "Loudmouths and Their Former Teams" and "Not-so-Proud Olympic Moments") for one to three players (but a room full of people can play along – it's the perfect party game).

Sports is more than just picking questions and answering them. There are options which add to the total game experience. These include: "Gibberish Questions," where the answer is scrambled, "Fiber Optic Field Trips," which occur randomly, the dreaded "Screw Your Neighbor," for when you're convinced your opponent doesn't know the answer and finally, the "Jack Attack," where you must match words that are related (such as Steelers with Pittsburgh).

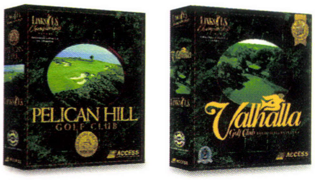
If you love sports trivia and you think you know all the answers then you'll love this game. Of course, even if you answer all the questions correctly it won't really matter, because *You Don't Know Jack* (*Sports* that is). – *Dan Olawski*

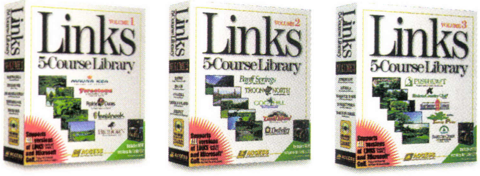
ACCESS
SOFTWARE INCORPORATED

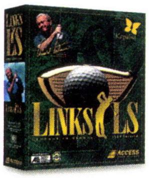


"Can I challenge Arnold Palmer and my buddy in Tibet to a skins game on Maui in heavy fog at 3AM?"

Can I golf in 16.7 million colors? Can I play against Arnold Palmer at Latrobe? Can I play against my friend in Tibet? Can either of them beat me? Can I take a 3-D tour of the Kapalua Plantation Clubhouse? Can I play match play? Best ball? Skins? Can I add in my own sounds? Can I position a camera over the ocean? Can I place a camera right in front of the ball? Won't that break the camera lens? Can I still play all the Links Championship Courses? Can I add fog? Can I play with WIN 95? Can I get 1600X1200 resolution? Can I make a high-arching wedge shot back up on the green? Can I watch Arnie react to a good shot? A bad shot? Can I resize the viewing windows? Can I see the tees break off? Can I choose from different golfers? Both male and female? Can I use the mowing stripes to read the contour of the green? Can I take a Virtual Reality tour of Arnie's workshop? Can I golf in Hawaii, Pennsylvania and Chicago on the same day? Can I get a 3AM tee time? Can I hear the birds and waves in 3-D stereo? Can I hit my ball 1/2 mile out of bounds? Can I play from there? Can I watch aerial fly-bys of every hole? Can I choose from more than 15 add-on courses? Can I watch an instant replay of my swing? Are there multiple camera views? Can I challenge an artificially-intelligent computer opponent? Can I retract the control panel? Can I call toll-free for support? Can I take multimedia tours of Kapalua and Latrobe? Can I save a round in progress, go to dinner, and finish it later? Can I send and receive text messages during a round on the modem? If I lived on the course could I find my house? **Is Links LS the most realistic golf simulation ever?** → "Yes."


The NEW Links LS add-on courses


The NEW Links **5-Course** Libraries Vol. 1, 2 & 3:
Playable with Links LS, Links Pro CD, Microsoft® Golf, & Links Pro CD Macintosh®



LINKS LS

www.accesssoftware.com • Code: 010-CGW

For a FREE Links LS Trial-Size version CD, call 1.800.800.4880

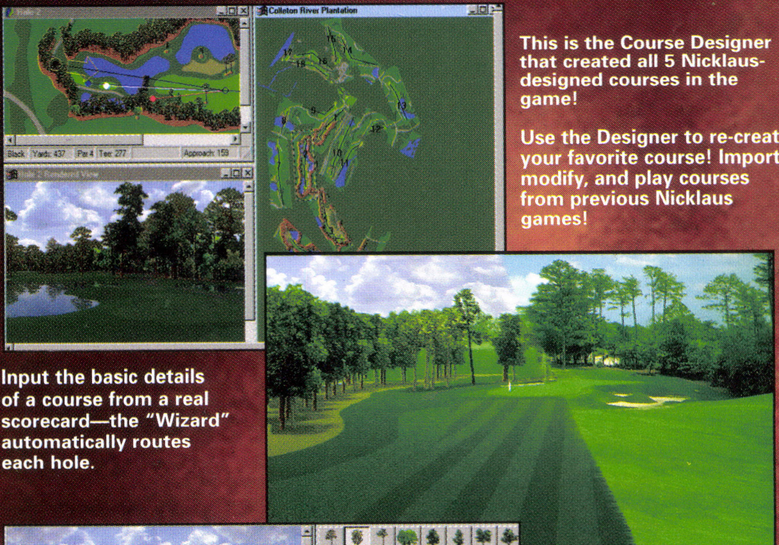
Call 1.800.800.4880 for a FREE Pandora Directive Demo CD

introducing

Jack Nicklaus 4™

Featuring *Colleton River Plantation, Country Club of the South, Muirfield Village, Cabo del Sol,* and *Winding Springs.*

The Course Designer


Colleton River Plantation
Hole 2
Black Yards: 437 Par 4 Tee: 277 Approach: 159

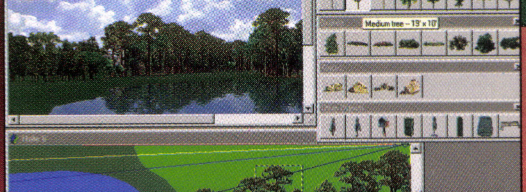
This is the Course Designer that created all 5 Nicklaus-designed courses in the game!

Use the Designer to re-create your favorite course! Import, modify, and play courses from previous Nicklaus games!

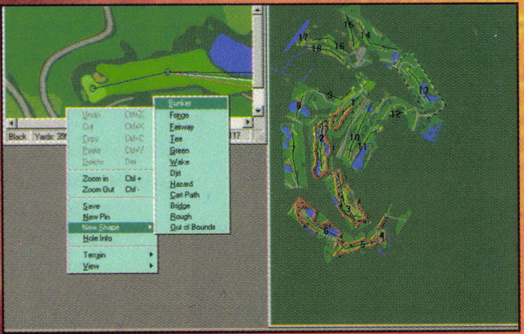
Input the basic details of a course from a real scorecard—the "Wizard" automatically routes each hole.

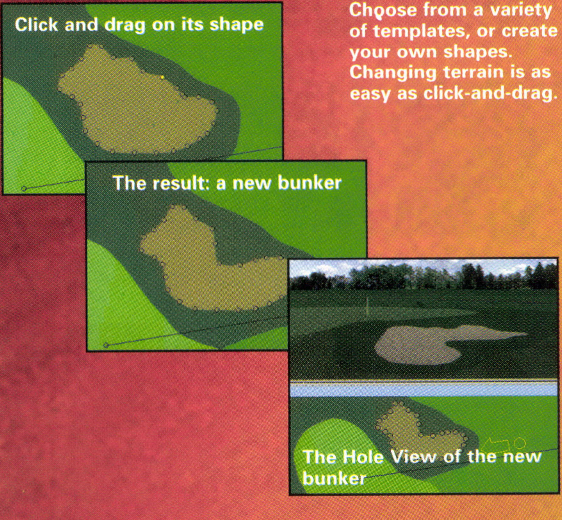
"Is it live or is it...?" Our Course Designer is so true-to-life, it's hard to tell the difference!

This image is of the 3rd Green at Country Club of the South. The left half of the image is from the Course Designer; the right half of the image is an actual photo.


Medium tree - 19' x 10'
Hole 9
Black Yards: 403 Par 4 Tee: 267 Approach: 136 To Tee: 229 Green: 173 X: 309 Y: 124

Choose from over 100 different types of trees, bushes, rocks, and other objects!


Undo Ctrl+Z
Cut Ctrl+X
Copy Ctrl+C
Paste Ctrl+V
Delete Del
Zoom In Ctrl +
Zoom Out Ctrl -
Save
New Pin
New Shape
Hole Info
Terrain
View
Bunker
Fringe
Fairway
Tee
Green
Wake
Dirt
Hazard
Cart Path
Bridge
Rough
Out of Bounds



Click and drag on its shape

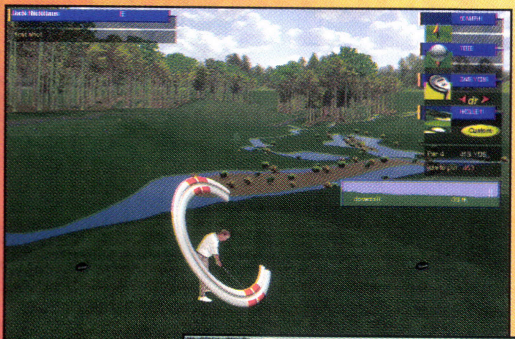
The result: a new bunker

The Hole View of the new bunker

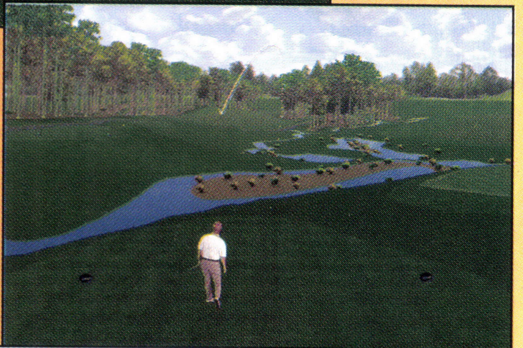
Choose from a variety of templates, or create your own shapes. Changing terrain is as easy as click-and-drag.

From Tee to Green

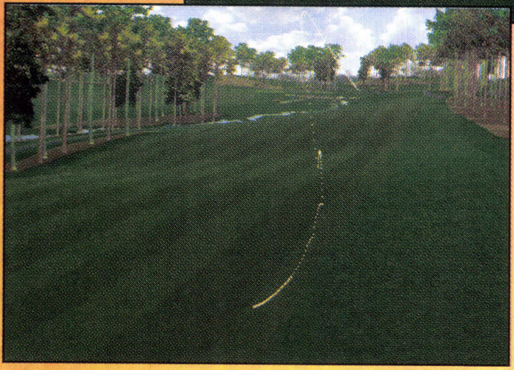
The Tee Shot



Pop-up displays are optional–leave them off for the purest golfing experience.



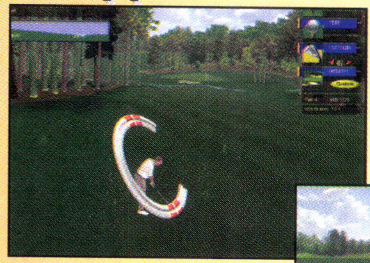
24-bit color lets you view your round at resolutions and color depths as high as your system will support.



Replay shots from unlimited camera angles, from ground level, or up to 300 feet in the air!

The fastest screen redraw times on the PC allow the camera to automatically switch to the landing in full-screen, from varying viewpoints!

The Approach Shot

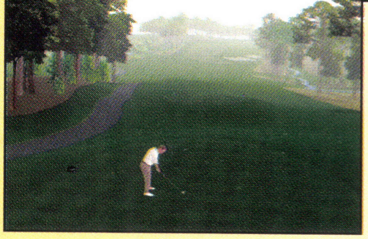


New "Intensity Control™" reproduces the dynamics that shape the shot. "Club up and swing easy" for control or a low trajectory; "swing hard" when you want spin and distance.

Every shot flies, bounces, and rolls true to the game, with the best ball physics model in existence. Courses are accurate to within 6 inches!

Multiplayer play is fully supported, including recorded rounds, shared keyboard, serial, modem, LAN and Internet play.

Play all of the best golf formats: stroke play, match play, skins, shootout, gross tournament, net tournament and "side games" like "Bingo, Bango, Bongo."



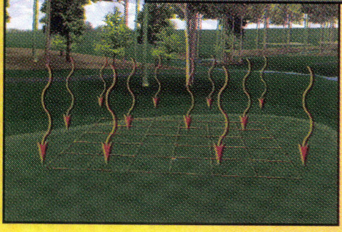
Weather can change in the middle of the round, and natural wind variations and every possible turf condition add to the challenge!

Around The Green

With beautiful, high-speed graphics, a true physics model, more realistic swing meters, better putting, and unlimited camera positions, *Jack Nicklaus 4* is truly the game every golfer has anticipated!

Call 1–800–245–7744 to order direct

Separate chipping and putting meters maximize control around the green.

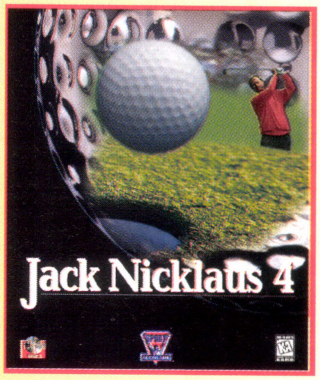


Our new approach makes putting more realistic. Mow lines on the green help you read the contour.

For enhanced gameplay, this optional grid floats down and drapes itself over the green, clearly showing all high and low spots.

Look for the Jack Nicklaus 4 playable demos in select magazines or online at **http://www.accolade.com**

For hints and tips on Accolade products, call Accolade Direct 1-900-454-HINT. $0.99/minute. If you are under 18, please get your parents' permission before making this call.



PC CD-ROM WINDOWS 95

MODEM SERIAL SOLO PLUS LAN INTERNET™

ACCOLADE

Jack Nicklaus 4, Accolade, and the Solo Plus logos are trademarks of Accolade, Inc. ©1996 Accolade, Inc. All rights reserved. All other trademarks are of their respective owners. Screenshots from pre-Alpha version of the game. Actual screen shots may vary.

Tough guys

Whoa! I just read a few of your reviews from your December issue, and I gotta tell you guys that you are WAY OUT THERE. Three and a half stars for *Madden NFL 97* and *Mechwarrior 2: Mercenaries*?! I own both, and both are at least a whole star above what you rated them. *Madden NFL 97* is just an arcade type game, because that's what people wanted. We've got plenty of football sims out there, but none were like the console games. Finally the PC has one, and it's great. Darn good graphics, good animation, and good game play.

Michael J. Przybocki
via the Internet

Our ratings of the games were based on what they did right or wrong according to their own essential premises. Neither accomplished everything it explicitly set out to do, and that's why we took points off. Our reviews explained the wherefore in detail, if you'd like to check – ed.

Neanderthals at large

I am an infrequent reader of your magazine and while I usually do not comment on what I see in it, in the case I am about to describe, I really felt obligated to note my objections to something in one of your game reviews. I refer, specifically, to the review of *A-10 Cuba!* as described on page 168 of your December, 1996 issue. While I realize that responsibility for the contents of this game rests with its designer (Parsoft, to whom I hope you will pass on these comments), I think your editorial staff completely abdicated its journalistic responsibility to outline the context of the game, in writing the review.

I refer, in particular, to the following two quotes from the review: "...The player is based at Guantanamo Bay fending off guerrilla forces that don't know communism is dead..." "...Bombing airfields, sinking destroyers, stomping armor columns, and even flaming tobacco-laden trucks are some objectives of the game's twelve missions..." Has it ever occurred to either your reviewers, or Parsoft, that many people around the world – including myself – would find the setting of this game (which involves the military forces of the United States attacking Cuba) extremely offensive?

Just how much fun, do you suppose, it would be to create a game where you are the (civilian) driver of a "flamed tobacco-laden truck," and you get your ass blown to Kingdom Come by the invading air force of the United States, after all you tried to do was earn a living for your family? Could either CGS+ or Parsoft enlighten me as to what the driver of the truck did to the United States, to justify his being killed by the big, tough pilot of the A-10 in this game?

And while you're at it, perhaps you could explain by what right the US military, in this game, has decided to force its system of government down the throats of the Cuban people who "don't know that communism is dead"? I doubt that your reviewer would have missed the implications of (say) a game where the player gets to murder "blacks, Jews or Commies" in the US, or in which the player gets to be a Soviet Gulag guard who gets points for shooting escaping prisoners.

Your magazine's implicit endorsement of simulated aggression against the civilian population of a tiny, nearly defenseless island nation whose only crime has been not to say "how high" when the United States says "jump," deeply disturbs me – especially when one considers that this game might be the *only* "education" on the US/Cuba relationship that many young game players will ever get.

Throughout my life with computers and the Internet I have been, and remain, strongly opposed to censorship of game and other contents. A few more games like *A-10 Cuba!*, however, may just change my mind.

Marcus Shields
via the Internet

If we were to start thinking along such lines, a good 90% of what's out there might soon receive similar (and more decisive) condemnation. The unfortunate fact for now, at least, is that the morality and politics and basic human understanding present in most computer games (and, by implication, the audience for same?) is about two steps short of "adolescent neo-fascist" in sophistication. If that ever changes, I'll be among the first to go dancing in the streets. Thanks for your comments. – ed.

Let's talk football

Thanks for the info on *Total Control Football*. I see *Monday Night Football* as more of an arcade game because it is so heavily biased towards offense. I ran a few league weeks letting the computer run the games, and the average score was 40 points plus. There were over 10 QB's who averaged over 300 yards per game. The on-the-fly editor is nice, but it's the results I am most interested in.

The thing that bugs me about *Front Page Sports Football* is that the results are totally unrealistic. RB's either run for a two yd loss or a 12 yd gain. The worst thing you can do if you think a team is going to go deep is call a dime zone (the exact opposite of real football). Linebackers don't react; they just sit there most of the time on passing plays. I could go on, but you get the picture.

Why is it that in strategy and war games we demand a high level of realism, but with sports games we settle for so little? Game designers with sports games seem more interested in graphics and sound than they do a realistic simulation. Keep up the good work! I just started subscribing to your magazine, and I really enjoy it so far.

Steve Weber
via the Internet

Sports games on the PC have been trying to do everything: graphics, arcade, simulation, statistics. Strategy and simulation games with similar aspirations have failed along similar lines (mainly in the "realism" dept.). Guess it's a question of the scope of your ambitions, and how much you want to see integrated in one effort! – ed.

What about the balls?

I think an injustice has been done a great game.

In your December issue, Steve Bauman in his "Cheat Thrills" column bemoans the lack of any beauty in the current crop of 3D games. He mentions *Relentless* as perhaps the sole contender for this honor. He's missed out on one of the leaders in this limited field – *Ecstatica*. It brought beautiful, strange and innovative visuals to the PC. It had evocative backgrounds, innovative camera angles, a moody and yet evocative soundtrack and allowed astonishing freedom in gameplay before coming to the inevitable conclusion. It was fun, encouraged exploration, and was full of scenes which were interesting solely for the point of being interesting looking. Trouble was, it was just too short.

Ah well, perhaps the upcoming sequel will last longer...

Jason Durall
via the Internet

Steve B. replies: You, sir, are 100% correct. Ecstatica *is one of my favorite games, incredibly warped and in possession of a singularly interesting graphic style that was carried throughout the design. Everything was made up of balls, from the characters to the texture of the grass. Truly a breakthrough in graphic design, but you're right about the shortness of gameplay. The sequel does address that problem, and should be out around the time you're reading this. I for one can hardly wait.*

speak!
we like mail
if you send us mail, we might even run it in the magazine
Write: **Computer Games**
P.O. Box 1008
Richmond VT 05477
e-mail: **splus@together.net**
online: **www.cdmag.com**
Letters may be edited for space considerations

Computer Games Strategy Plus (ISSN 0955-4424) is published monthly by Strategy Plus, Inc. Subscription rate is $23.95 for a one year subscription, $33.95 Canada. Periodical postage paid at Rochester, VT 05767 and additional mailing offices. **Produced in U.S.A.**
Postmaster: Send address changes to Strategy Plus, Inc., PO Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834-9283. Fax: 201.627.5872

The demand for computer programmers will double by the year 2005...

Train now for a high-paying career as a computer programmer!

NEW!
Powerful 133 MHz
Pentium® processor-based computer!

Netscape Navigator 2.0

Only NRI at-home training gives you in-demand programming skills in three of today's hottest computer languages: BASIC, C, and Visual Basic.

Plus, you now train with and keep state-of-the-art programming tools: a Pentium® 133 multimedia computer system, Visual Basic, Windows 95, and more!

Prepare for today's newest programming opportunities

The Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts that job opportunities for computer programmers will increase much faster than the average over the next 10 years, with as many as 400,000 new jobs opening up by 2005.

Now, with NRI, you can get the new skills you need to build a top-paying career — even a full- or part-time business of your own — in this high-growth field.

Learn today's hottest languages!

With NRI's unique Discovery Learning Method, you get hands-on programming experience as you master today's most popular languages and programming environments. Step by step, you learn to create the kinds of full-featured, powerful programs today's employers and clients demand:

- You **start with BASIC,** building your confidence enough to create and modify several programs of your own.
- You move on to **master C,** a sophisticated language that's become the programming tool of choice for a variety of applications.
- You're then ready to **explore Visual Basic,** a high-level, object-oriented language designed specifically for creating programs in a Windows 95 environment.

Best of all, you master these important languages as you train with and keep the most powerful computer system available from any school!

Send for your FREE catalog today!

See how NRI can give you the programming skills, the full-featured computer system, and the state-of-the-art software you need to get started in this top-paying field.

If the coupon is missing, write to us at NRI Schools, 4401 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008.

CALL 1-800-321-4634, Ext. 2245
http://www.mhcec.com

More equipment, more advanced software, and more real-world programming experience than any other school!

NEW!
Internet
Training!

Netscape Navigator
Microsoft Windows 95
Visual Basic
News & Reference
NRI

- Pentium® 133 processor
- 8 meg RAM and 256K cache memory
- 1 gigabyte hard drive
- Super VGA color monitor; 1 meg video memory
- 8X CD-ROM drive and 16-bit sound card
- 28,800 baud fax/modem, plus 10 free hours of *America Online*
- Netscape Navigator™ Web browser
- BASIC interpreter
- Power C and Visual Basic compilers
- Windows 95

Now, with NRI's new PC Options Plan, you can keep up with late-breaking advances in technology by upgrading your computer system at special student rates. You'll get all the details shortly before your computer is scheduled for shipment. It's NRI's state-of-the-art guarantee!

SEND TODAY FOR FREE CATALOG

NRI Schools
4401 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20008

☑ Check one FREE catalog only
☐ COMPUTER PROGRAMMING
☐ PC Applications Specialist
☐ Visual Programming in C++
☐ Networking with Windows NT
☐ Microcomputer Servicing
☐ Desktop Publishing with PageMaker
☐ Bookkeeping & Accounting
☐ Multimedia Programming
☐ Mastering Microsoft Office
☐ Webmaster

OR GET YOUR DEGREE!
☐ **NEW!** Associate Degree in Accounting
☐ **NEW!** Associate Degree in Business Management

Name_____________________ Age____
(please print)
Address_____________________
City_____________________
State/Zip_____________________

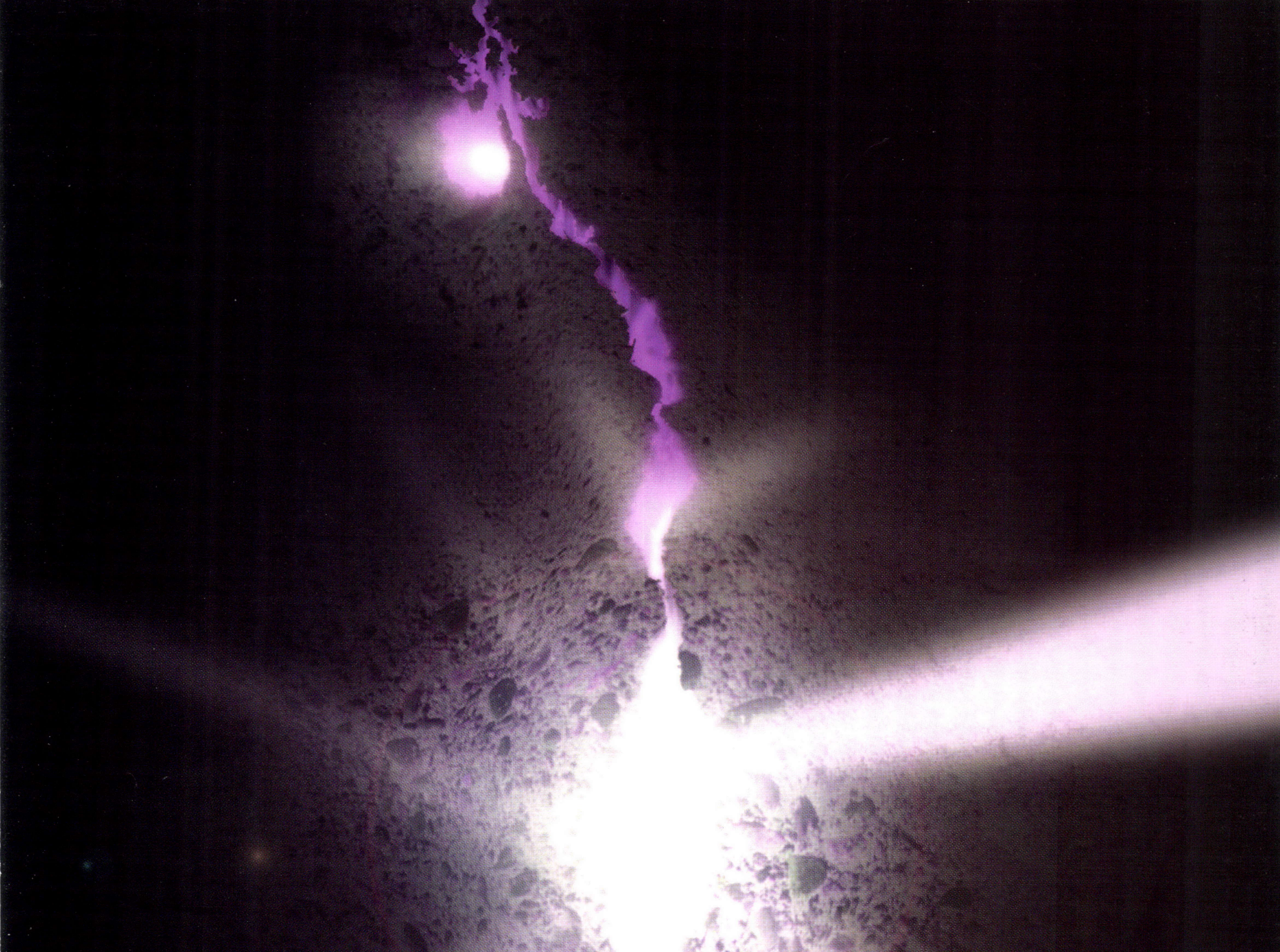
A Division of The McGraw-Hill Companies
5582-0297

IN
THE
PAST,
WE
EXCEEDED
YOUR
EXPECTATIONS.

SOON,
WE'LL
CHANGE
YOUR
ENTIRE
DESTINY.

Westwood™
STUDIOS
www.westwood.com

Lands of Lore: Guardians of Destiny is a registered trademark of Westwood Studios, Inc. ® 1996 Westwood Studios, Inc. All rights reserved.



LANDS OF LORE
GUARDIANS OF DESTINY™

There can
only be ONE
#1

NCAA® BASKETBALL FINAL FOUR® 97

We got NEXT!

Coming
March
1997!

www.mindscapegames.com

PlayStation™

Windows®
95
CD-ROM

MINDSCAPE SPORTS ALTERNATIVE™

MSA™

©1996 Mindscape, Inc. All rights reserved. Mindscape is a registered trademark and Mindscape Sports Alternative and the MSA logo are trademarks of Mindscape, Inc. The NCAA and Final Four are registered trademarks of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and are used under license by Mindscape, Inc. Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. PlayStation and the PlayStation logo are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. All other trademarks and registered trademarks are the property of their respective holders.